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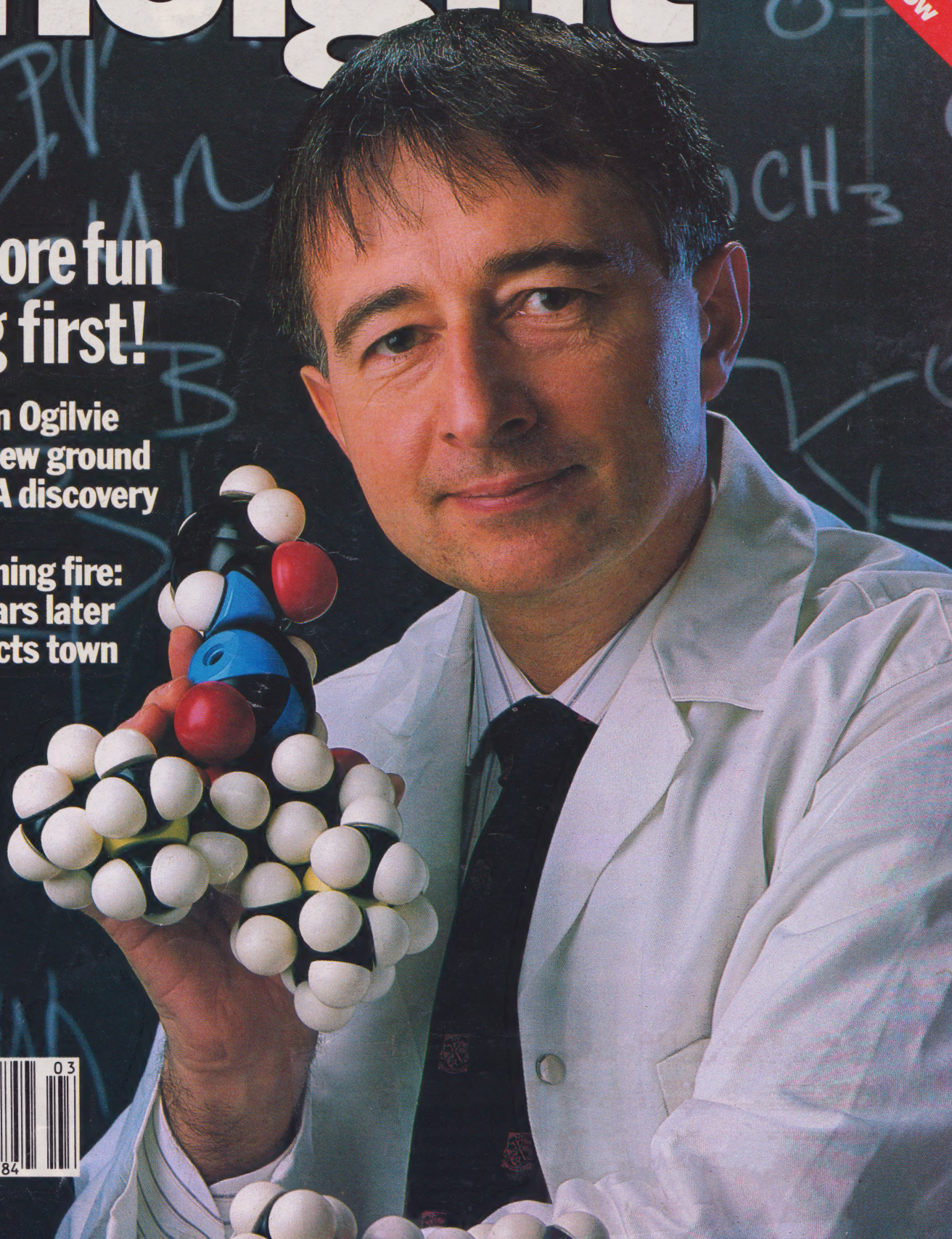
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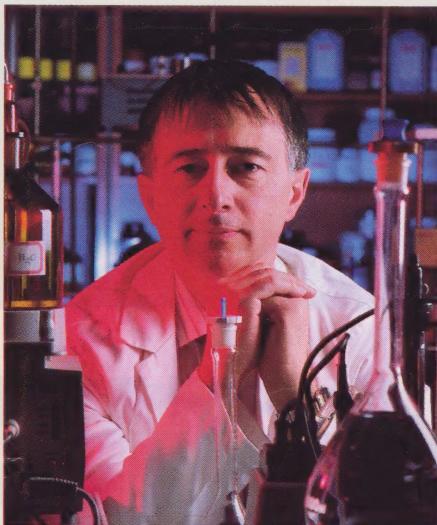
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MARCH 1989

VOL. 11 NO. 3



COVER STORY

A Nova Scotia scientist, Dr. Kelvin Ogilvie, has made a discovery that's brought him fame in the scientific community and that should go a long way toward solving genetic defects.

PAGE 14

COVER PHOTO BY ERIC HAYES



HOMES

In a special feature, this section about Homes concentrates on all aspects of gardening and landscaping — from when to sow, to how to keep your flower garden colourful all season long.

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SPECIAL REPORT

Three years after a disastrous chemical fire in Canning, N.S., some members and former members of the community are still feeling the effects.

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FOOD

Potatoes are popular and they don't have to be plain. In fact, the simple vegetable can be downright elegant — and can offer a few surprises as well.

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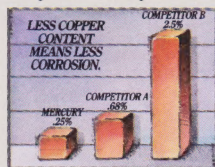
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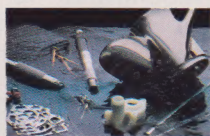
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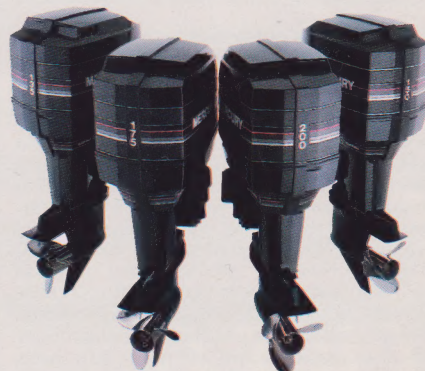
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ATLANTIC CANADA IN THE 80s

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PUBLISHER'S LETTER

Time to cut a colonial link

The islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon are a living, breathing reminder of how different the history of this part of the world might have been. And the experiences that those islands have been going through recently show that the Atlantic edge of North America has still not left its colonial past fully behind.

There was a time when France, not Britain, could have been the dominant power on this part of the continent. Maps remain of this region of Canada when it belonged to the French empire, with place names and settlements often drastically different from those we're familiar with.

The defeat of Louisbourg, the expulsion of the Acadians and the defeat of Montcalm in Quebec marked the end of France's northeastern Atlantic coastal empire. This region became British in our form of government; English became the dominant language; French and franco-phone culture survived only by franco-phones reaching an accommodation with the dominance of England and English.

Yet there is an exception to all of this, small but revealing in its characteristics: the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon. These two tiny islands, poorly endowed with natural resources on land but with their share of the riches of the sea around them, are today the remnants of France's North American empire. They are an amazing anomaly. Only a few miles off the coast of Newfoundland, in some respects they are very much like mainland France — but in other respects they are completely North American. The telephone system is very French, with the post office and its public long distance phones, with all long distance calls routed through Paris. The television system when I was there several years ago was French from France, brought over to the island. The architecture and town planning were very much like a small French village.

But the economic life of the islands is very similar to Newfoundland's. Their lifeblood is the fishery and the sea does not yield riches to the ordinary people of St. Pierre and Miquelon.

Events of the last few months have demonstrated that, in the eyes of Paris, St. Pierre and Miquelon are still very much a colony of mainland France. Of course, for years France has been making vigorous use of the presence of these island possessions to lay claims to ownership of a major share of the Atlantic fishery and to whatever rich resources may lie under the ocean bed. And there have been boundary disputes involving Newfoundland fishermen accused of fishing in French waters.

For a while it appeared that the powers

of the French state were being used to protect and promote the interest of the community on the islands themselves. Perhaps the people there thought so too. Events this winter have demonstrated, however, that in fact France is acting very much like colonial powers usually do. The fishery resource was being claimed not for use by the local community but for exploitation by mainland fishing interests from France operating freezer trawlers in these waters.

It has been heartening to see the response of these people of St. Pierre and Miquelon to these incursions on their modest resource base by France. Nor were they intimidated when the French navy showed up, or when troops were flown over.

At some point, perhaps in the near future, perhaps in the next several years, the people of St. Pierre and Miquelon may well conclude that their interests would be better served by cutting their left-over colonial link to France. If and when that day comes, Atlantic Canada will face a question with wonderful historical resonance: should St. Pierre and Miquelon be welcomed to the Canadian confederation?

Islanders would probably not find much attractive about the idea of trading their current unsatisfactory relationship with Paris for a few seats in the Newfoundland provincial legislature and maybe one MP in Ottawa. That way, a small but very distinct community would not have any more control over its circumstances than it has today — in fact, it might have less.

Would Canada consider offering the islands the status as our eleventh province? Their population is tiny, as is their land mass but they have a cultural cohesiveness as a result of their links to France which gives them a unique character of their own.

What about a tiny independent state off our shores with a special political and economic relationship with Canada but control over its resources?

Of course, the skilled application of French power and French diplomacy may be sufficient to maintain the status quo and prevent the residents of these islands from considering other political options. But this winter's events have suggested that Paris is pushing the people of the islands too far — and we could well find that the people of St. Pierre and Miquelon will decide that it is time to find a way of joining their future to that of the people who live in the rest of France's old north-eastern Atlantic coastal empire.

— James Lorimer






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FEEDBACK

Leading the way

Once again Nova Scotia has shown itself to be an innovative, creative, imaginative leader in the field of education, always giant steps ahead in ideas that really affect people and how they live, *East Coast Reader eases the work of new readers* (Jan.'89). *East Coast Reader* is a blessing for adult readers, as it is chock-full of information, which makes life much easier...

J.C. Previn
Saint John West, N.B.

Laughing with Ray

Ray Guy's column *Mysteries of the wider world* (Dec.'88) prompts me to write. I've been a subscriber to *Atlantic Insight* for a few years now and I've been tempted to write before when some humourless klutz sounded off against Ray's column...But this latest piece, the Grade Eight tussle with a "tough poem" in a rural school, it really made my day. And that day, believe me, really needed some making. I cut the page out and stuck it in a scrapbook before someone came along and carried off the magazine. Anything that can give you a good hearty recurring laugh nowadays is worth saving, no matter if it takes the last of your Scotch Tape...

Edith M. Mosher
Summerville, N.S.

Scolding Harry

I enjoy Harry Bruce's column, but I do not agree with *The Ins and Outs of Being Old* (Dec.'88). I will be 70 years of age in February, should I continue to exist. I worked for 40 years before retiring. During that time I paid approximately \$60,000 in income tax. This combined with sales tax and hidden taxes, school tax, property tax and every other tax going would probably amount to \$100,000.

Just taking income tax of \$60,000 would amount to at least \$100,000 if it had come to me and been invested. At 10 per cent, that would give me \$10,000 a year. The government paid me Old Age Security of \$3,800. Subtracted from \$10,000, that leaves a shortage of \$6,200 to me.

What I am attempting to do is using myself as an example of all middle class wage earners to show that I and they have paid for their own income of Old Age Security...

I imagine Harry Bruce is paying income tax now. If so, he is buying his own Old Age Security when it comes due. Nobody but nobody else is paying for it... My wife and I were born in New Brunswick and lived there for nearly 30 years. *Atlantic Insight* is like a letter from home.

T. M. Johnston
Salt Spring Island, B.C.

Harry Bruce seems to think that all seniors are fat cats. As a former president of the New Brunswick Senior Citizens Federation, and after many years working with seniors, I can assure Mr. Bruce that, while some retirees are enjoying their retirement years because of contributions made to pension plans, investments, etc., there are some and they are numerous, who, through no fault of theirs, did not have the opportunity to contribute during their active years...

These people are subsisting at or below the poverty line as established by the Canadian Welfare Council.

J. L. Arsenault
Richibucto, N.B.

...We "elderly parasites" can read and pause to remember the time we were young and well enough to work long hours for companies who never had a pension plan. We also paid into the Canada Pension Plan and paid taxes and most of all, gave the youngest and best years of our lives to make a free country for Mr. Bruce to write such garbage and entertain such thoughts of the elderly...

D. Hyslop
Albert, N.B.

Citing our references

I write in relation to Harry Flemming's article, *Buchanan: one more time* (Nov.'88).

Mr. Flemming refers to the "insensitive treatment of Donald Marshall Jr." whom, Mr. Flemming opines "accepted the government's niggardly offer of \$270,000."

I find it interesting that Mr. Flemming should, on the one hand, feel compassion for the plight of Donald Marshall and, in the same breath, cast aspersions against blacks. Surely both are entitled to protection from discrimination.

Personally, I would have hoped that a magazine of your reputation and circulation would have been sensitive enough to human rights issues to have refused to publish the article in this form. My reaction to the reference is compounded by the fact that this article was indeed the cover story.

Gillian D. Butler
Chief Adjudicator
Dept. of Justice,
Human Rights Commission
St. John's, Nfld.

(Editor's note: For other readers who may have noted our use of the word "niggardly," we cite the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*: "niggard (prob. of Scandinavian origin) — a mean, stingy or parsimonious person; a miser." And *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*: "niggard (of Scand. origin) — a meanly covetous and stingy person; miser.")

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A L I S O N ' S

What makes an innovator?

Re: *Innovators of the Year* (Jan.'89): do \$2.9 million for a Venture Centre, an unspecified amount for expansion, \$250,000 for a TV broadcast to North Americans, plus \$244,000 for an intended broadcast in 1989 — all taxpayers' money — for a few jobs while the rent is almost free make one an innovator? Surely taxpayers' money could be put to a much better and worthwhile use, or should every little community apply for a Venture Centre?

John R. Seymour
Corner Brook, Nfld.

Helping the help lines

I wish to make one small but to many of us in this area very important correction to the splendid article *Listening and Caring and Making the Right Connections* (Jan.'89).

...The Annapolis Valley Help Line has not closed and is more active and more strongly supported than it ever has been...

Thank you for informing your readers of the fine work being done by Care Lines in the Atlantic Region...

Rev. Harold T. Cox
Middleton, N.S.

Good news and bad news

When I was still in high school, 10 years ago, I subscribed to a brand-new magazine especially designed for those of us living in Eastern Canada (the real Eastern Canada). The magazine was

Atlantic Insight. I moved away and let my subscription lapse.

But I've recently moved back and received a subscription for Christmas. I've missed so much while I was gone! I eagerly lap up all *Atlantic Insight* has to offer soon after it arrives...

Elaine Power
Port aux Basques, Nfld.

...The December 1988 issue was the first one of the year that I thought was rather below the level of material usually printed in *Insight*. I am, of course, referring to Leo MacKay Jr.'s story *Falling through the cracks*, listed as fiction. I would say that it is no fiction but the thoughts of a person who had a bad hangover from the night before...I presume the writer of the story is a son of the well known labour leader of a few years ago...

R.M. McColl
Ottawa, Ont.

Your December issue of *Atlantic Insight* had some first rate articles as usual; however, I found the short story by Leo MacKay Jr. most offensive, pointless and coarse to the point of being vulgar...

Michael Douglas
Armdale, N.S.

After reading the December issue of *Atlantic Insight*, I would like to cancel my subscription for the coming year.

Harry Bruce's reference to Spanish-

speaking, dark skinned, Catholics did not sit well with me although I am light skinned, English-speaking and of Irish Catholic parentage, nor did the story, *Falling through the cracks*...

Mrs. Albert Lionais
North Sydney, N.S.

...I've been stockpiling my subscription notices...In the December issue, outside of the wonderful short story by Leo MacKay Jr. and some interesting Christmas reminiscences, it was just more of the same...I thought everything that could be said by Harry Bruce and about Harry Bruce returning "home" to Port Shoreham had been said 20 times over. But I was wrong. The publisher used his space to do yet another re-run...

Joanne Lamey
Dartmouth, N.S.

I would like to compliment you on ...where my heart has always been (Jan.'89). I remember as a small boy during the dark days of World War II how desperately the Allies struggled against the Axis war machine. Lord Beaverbrook played a key role in getting co-ordination of the Allied industrial might that eventually turned the tide during the war.

We all owe him a debt of gratitude as he was one of the great leaders of the free world.

John C. Hall M.D.
Atlanta, Georgia

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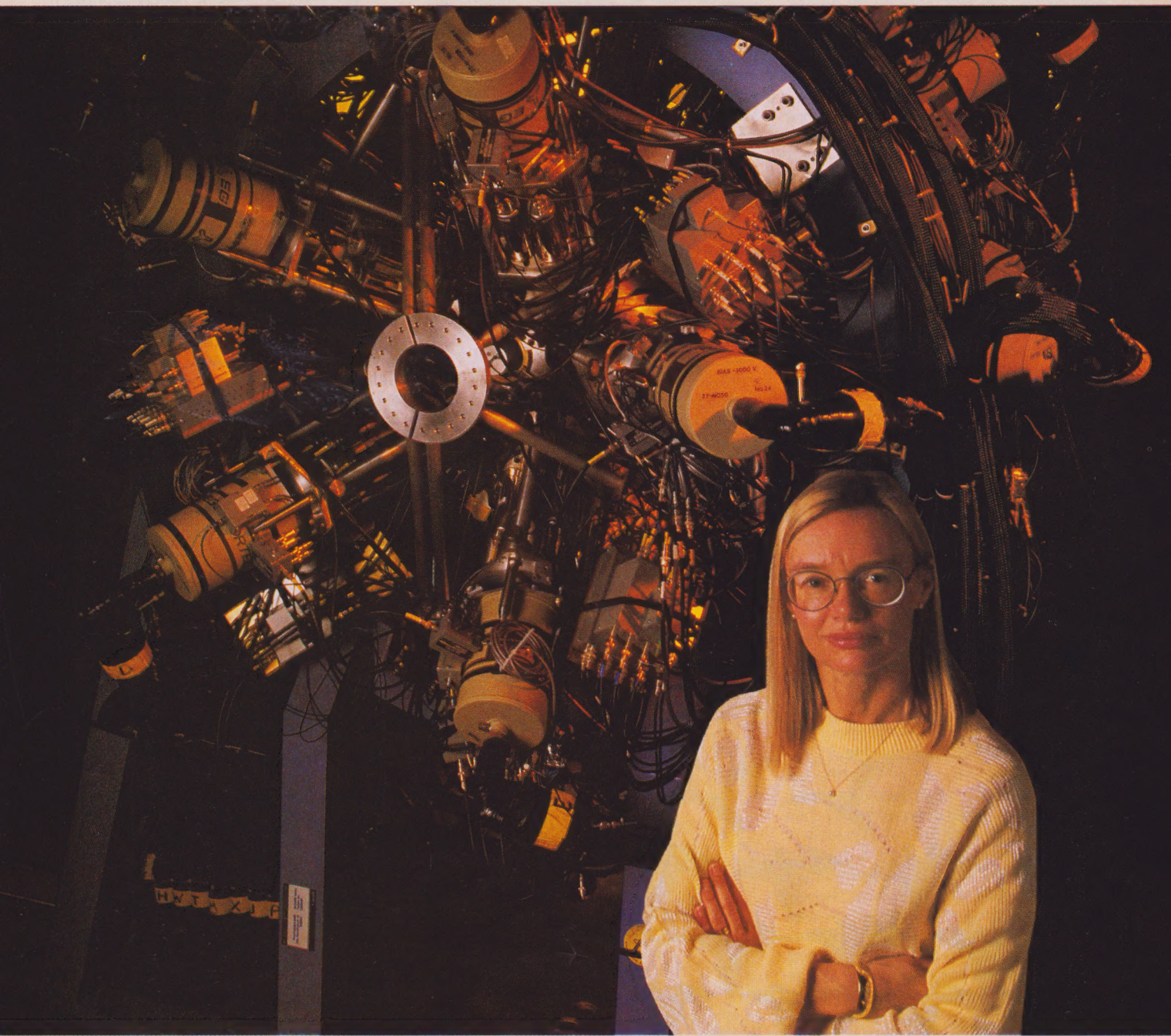
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The Human Energy Behind Nuclear Energy

Helena Lindqvist is a physicist with the Tandem Accelerator Superconducting Cyclotron (TASCC) facility at the Chalk River laboratories of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL). She is standing beside the "8- π spectrometer". This array of 92 detectors is used to observe the energy emitted when two atomic nuclei fuse together. The spectrometer is jointly owned and operated by AECL and the Universities of Montreal and McMaster (funded by grants from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council).

Nuclear Energy in Canada

THE REWARDS OF RESEARCH

In 1933, Sir Ernest Rutherford – one of the world's great pioneering nuclear scientists – publicly stated that no one would ever produce useful amounts of power from the atomic nucleus.

Only six years later, European physicists Lise Meitner and Otto Frisch were able to describe for the first time how uranium atoms could release energy by splitting apart, through a process they called "fission". By 1942, that knowledge had become a practical reality in the first nuclear reactor, which operated at the University of Chicago.

Basic Research

Rutherford was mistaken in his predictions. Yet, it was his own discoveries about the structure of the atom, some of them made while he was a professor at McGill University, that helped create the nuclear industry of today.

"That's how it is with basic research", says Helena Lindqvist, physicist with the Chalk River Laboratories of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited. "Scientists can never take for granted what they will learn from their next experiment, let alone what the eventual applications might be."

The Search Goes On

Since the discovery of fission fifty years ago, a worldwide nuclear industry has developed, which has not forgotten its research origins. Basic researchers like Helena Lindqvist, with her colleagues at Chalk River and at Canadian universities, continue to study the nucleus and its properties.

With giant accelerators like TASC and experimental equipment like the "8-pi spectrometer", they can now study what happens when two nuclei are fused together – fission in reverse. The search for knowledge goes on. And new benefits continue to emerge.

Benefits to Canada

Canada leads the world in the development of peaceful and beneficial uses of nuclear energy. In fact, Canada has chosen to work only on such applications. And these go far beyond generating electricity.

"Canada's nuclear industry has pioneered many beneficial uses – from the world's first cobalt therapy unit for cancer treatment, to the sterilization of medical instruments, quality control of industrial processes and improvement of agricultural crops."

The industry now employs many thousands of scientists, engineers, researchers and technicians, creating 100,000 jobs overall in Canada. And it is making a \$4 billion per year contribution to the Canadian economy.

Canada's nuclear industry is committed to basic research and to the discovery of new and valuable applications of the fission process for the benefit of humanity.

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Bedside nursing a casualty of new hospital facilities

Nursing shortages in New Brunswick are being blamed on the low priority given to the profession within the health care system

by Alan Johnson

The role of the registered nurse is changing across the country but nowhere is it more evident than in New Brunswick, where nurses see their priority in the health care system severely reduced.

In the election campaign of 1987 which led to the McKenna government's total control of the legislature, the Liberals promised nurses that they'd have a say on health care under the new government. They were quick to agree that working nurses needed direct input into government decisions affecting them. But since the McKenna government took power, not a single working, bedside nurse has been appointed to the New Brunswick Nursing Resources Advisory Council which, as the name implies, bends the government's ear on the concerns of nurses.

Elizabeth Ann Stordy has been a nurse in the neuro-intensive care unit of the Moncton Hospital since 1977. She's upset that the provincial committee has yet to ask a bedside nurse to join its ranks. "There are nurses on the committee but they're not staff nurses," she says. "These nurses are from management. The election promise was to have somebody who'd be at the bedside, who could have real input into changes within the health care system."

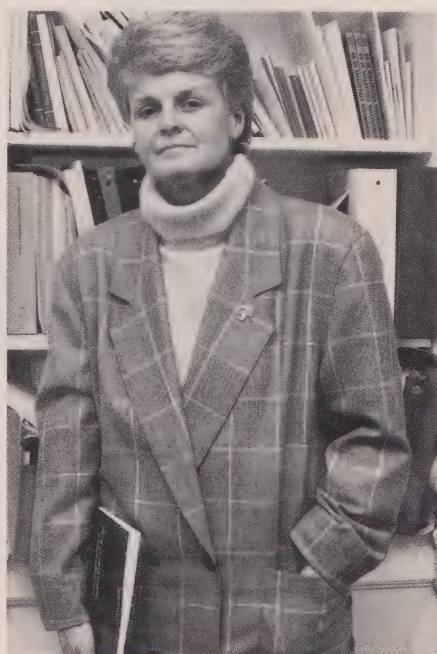
New Brunswick nurses also feel separate from their counterparts in the rest of Canada because they see themselves as coming second to hospital renovations. Hospital upgrading has been going on in some parts of the province for as long as 18 years. The cost overruns on ongoing hospital projects in Moncton, Edmundston, Tracadie and Campbellton are estimated to be in the \$77-million range.

The Liberals say massive cost overruns are the fault of their Tory predecessors. Still, playing catch-up to get those hospitals in operation by 1993 is being done on a priority basis. And nurses say the government is cutting back on nursing positions in order to pay for it.

Madeleine Steeves is the president of the New Brunswick Nurses' Union. She says there's too much emphasis being placed on buildings and not enough on people. "Hospital budgets haven't been able to keep up with the needs of nursing staff," she says. "It's fine to have new

buildings but, if you don't have new equipment and you don't have sufficient staff, then it's very difficult to provide a high standard of quality care. What hasn't been kept up in the past few years is the number of dollars budgeted for nursing positions."

The problem is two-fold. The government can't afford enough nurses to staff the hospitals it's operating and to finish the facilities that have been under construction for years. And the additional stress on nurses who don't have enough co-workers to help them out is driving them away from the profession.



Steeves: problems with hospital budgets

New Brunswick has seven nursing schools. Of that number, five grant nursing diplomas, while the other two have degree-granting status. Each year for the past 11 years, these schools have graduated between 200 and 300 nurses. Even by the most conservative estimates, there have been 2,200 new nurses ready to join the work force since 1977. But registrations with the provincial nursing association over that time period demonstrate an alarming trend. The number of registered nurses in New Brunswick since that year has only increased by 1,200, according to figures finalized last September.

Steeves claims nurses were leaving the province on a pretty regular basis four and five years ago "because there was no guarantee of work in New Brunswick."

According to Stordy, there are private hospitals in the United States offering much better money and benefits — a real temptation for single nurses. "A nurse going down to North Carolina, for example, could have an hourly rate starting at \$21 to \$22 an hour," she says. "And they're being offered travel allowances of up to \$2,000 — some with a car for a month or two until they get situated."


Although New Brunswick is the only province with a nursing association that hasn't agreed to co-operate in making university degrees mandatory by the year 2000, nurses with degrees are still getting promotions ahead of diploma nurses. Stordy says that's another advantage of hospitals south of the border. "They've got educational leave, so if they want to go down there and get their degree or take a training course, they don't have to worry."

An additional aspect of the nursing profession in New Brunswick is what's known as the extra-mural hospital program. The province is the only one in which nurses and doctors care for patients, especially the elderly, at home. It's the envy of other provincial governments because it reduces the cost of health care and it's been proven that people recover more quickly in familiar surroundings.

But it also means the current nursing shortage is further complicated because of the two hospital systems. And Steeves says there is a constant turnover of patients in the traditional hospital system with only the sickest patients kept in hospital wards, increasing the daily stress faced by nurses.

She emphasizes that more nurses are needed to care for hospital patients now, because the population is generally older. "When you are ill and elderly, it becomes more of a care for the nurse," says Steeves. "You're likely to need more acute care than a younger person would."

The combination of these factors is creating an uphill battle for health minister Ray Frenette. He's among the first to admit there are problems and says the report released last year by the nursing resources advisory committee on the quality of nurses' work-life is a positive step toward changing things.

But the nurses say that the committee's recommendations as well as suggestions from other groups scrutinizing New Brunswick health care all point to the magnitude of the nursing crisis. Most agree the problem is critical but the solution is long-term. In the meantime, as one nurse put it, "the band-aid approach continues." 

More questions than answers three years after air crash

The investigation into the Gander air crash has produced an unprecedented two reports, each reaching different conclusions

by Ian Carter

On a cold December morning in 1985 the worst air crash on Canadian soil happened at Gander International Airport. All 256 on board the Arrow Airlines DC-8 died at the scene, just a half mile from the departure runway. Three years later the exact cause is still unclear, even after a lengthy examination by the Canadian Aviation Safety Board (CASB) and the release of an unprecedented two reports.

The two reports resulted from a disagreement among the nine CASB members. Five members, including chair Kenneth Thorneycroft, are of the opinion that icing on the aircraft's wings was the most likely cause. "We cannot state with absolute conviction that ice was the only cause but it certainly is the most probable cause," Thorneycroft says.

Four of the board members disagreed with this conclusion and issued a dissenting report. It dismissed the ice theory and attributed the crash to an on-board fire caused by an unexplained explosion before impact. The minority report suggested sabotage but no conclusive evidence was discovered.

When the 16-year-old DC-8 went down, it was on a military charter flight from Cairo, Egypt to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, carrying 248 members of the 101st Airborne Division of the United States Army. The soldiers were returning from peace-keeping duties in the Sinai desert. The aircraft had just been refueled before it crashed. At impact, about 20 seconds after lift off, it burst into flames and much of the aircraft and those on board were burned beyond recognition.

The Flight Data Recorder or "black box" is often one of the most revealing aircraft components during a crash investigation. It was recovered from the crash site later the same day. There was a slight malfunction but investigators were able to reconstruct such things as the aircraft's heading, altitude and airspeed, relative to the elapsed time of the short flight.

The FDR indicated that, as the maximum recorded airspeed was reached, the altitude measurements started to oscillate in an extreme manner. Such readings indicate the aircraft was in a stall moments before it hit the ground. This is consistent with the way the treetops at the crash site

were sheared off.

The head of the Canadian Air Line Pilots' Association is not yet convinced that wing ice caused the crash. Captain Norm Bindon also complained that a minority report suggesting the plane was destroyed by a possible explosion "offers no evidence that could lead to either conclusion."

Gordon Sinclair, president of the Air Transport Association of Canada, says



GREG LOCKE

Hiscock claims the board's inquiry was sloppy and that U.S. officials covered up facts

members of the CASB who wrote the dissenting opinion "are engaged in a procedural battle that has engulfed the board. If there had been a fire on board, it would have been raging before the plane even started down the runway. An explosion strong enough to cause a crash would have left debris on the runway."

Gander's mayor, Doug Sheppard feels that the CASB used poor judgement in releasing a report on the crash on the eve of the third anniversary of the tragedy. "They could have at least waited until after Christmas," he says. "It still upsets people both here in Gander and in the U.S., even though it's three years later."

At the time of the crash in 1985 Sheppard was on his way to St. John's. The first details were sketchy and Sheppard wasn't sure if the plane had crashed in the town, in Gander Lake or elsewhere. "If it had gone down in the lake we would be concerned about Gander's water supply. On the other hand, it is unfortunate it didn't go into the lake because we might have had survivors."

"The whole thing reeks of a coverup,"

says Fraser Hiscock, a firefighter at the crash site. "And I don't buy the ice theory. You almost have to suspect that something is being covered up by someone, somewhere." Hiscock, spokesperson for the Public Service Alliance of Canada, says he thinks American officials have not given Canada all the facts about what was on the plane.

"The board's inquiry also appears to have been sloppy because investigators didn't interview several people who might have shed some light on the accident," he says. "For example, a truck driver who claimed to have seen a fire in the belly of the plane as it crossed the Trans Canada Highway was not interviewed."

The majority report of the CASB explained the orange glow that was reported by some eyewitnesses as a possible reflection of another runway's approach lights on the underside of the plane. This theory is reinforced by several facts. None of the

eyewitnesses was able to describe the exact location of the glow. The aircraft was flying lower than normal. Forensic tests by pathologists on the bodies yielded no evidence of pre-impact inhalation of the products of combustion.

Although the dissenting report mentioned that all four thrust reversers may have been deployed prior to impact, it could not be proven definitely.

About the only thing that is clear from the two reports is that there is disagreement about what caused the accident. More than three years later, there still seem to be more questions than answers about the 20-second flight.

The CASB investigation, which was conducted more to advance aviation safety than to apportion blame or liability, has recommended that the department of transport initiate a national safety campaign to make sure all pilots are aware of the dangers of even minor wing-icing conditions. The report also says the department should implement detailed procedures for detecting wing icing prior to take-off.

Health care issues promise to be legislature's headache

Myriad problems in the health care system in Nova Scotia will be a central theme in this sitting of the legislature

The chaotic state of health care administration in Nova Scotia threatens to become the first test of John Buchanan's slim majority in the current session of the legislature.

The most recent controversy erupted shortly after Buchanan's victory in last fall's election, when longtime medical director of the Nova Scotia Hospital, Dr. Syed Naveed Akhtar, resigned and allegations of poor patient care and administration were made by a former hospital employee. Joel Matheson, health minister at the time, convened a three-member panel to look into the situation.

Newly "shuffled-in" health and fitness minister David Nantes was quick off the mark in his support for the hastily completed report. He promised that all of the 11 recommendations would be implemented but refused to release the details to the public because they "deal with individual personalities."

The decision to keep the report secret angered opposition critics. New Democratic Party leader Alexa McDonough asked if there was something in the report that the government wanted to hide. And Liberal health critic Sandy Jolly suggested that Nantes should meet and explain the situation to the Liberal caucus.

The problems associated with health care administration in the province have been a subject of scrutiny since late 1987 when the government announced plans for a Nova Scotia Royal Commission on Health Care. Camille Gallant, the chartered accountant and management consultant chosen to head the Commission, estimated that "in Nova Scotia this expenditure amounts to over one billion dollars annually." More than two-thirds of that total is spent on hospitals. He cited an interim report filed by the commission which stated that, "of the 10 provinces, Nova Scotia has the second highest number of acute care beds per capita (6.4 per 1,000 population)."

More than 300 groups and individuals made presentations to the commission as it trudged through 16 communities during the spring and summer of 1988. But the work of the commission was plagued by charges that it was a political ploy to defuse the health care issue during the election year.

The concern that the commission was

more politics than policy began with the appointment of Gallant, a well-known Tory supporter. Gallant fueled the opposition's outrage by appointing his own firm, Collins Barrow Management Consultants of Halifax, to oversee the work of the commission. Collins Barrow, not known for any special expertise in the health care field, was quickly axed in the resulting furor.

When the commission began its round of public hearings in April, rumours of an impending election were at their peak. While the commissioners listened to proposals to cut the costs of medical care,

Henshaw wants to look beyond the next election, the next government and into the next generation

Buchanan and Matheson announced plans to spend more than \$200 million on hospital construction and renovation; \$36 million for the Valley Regional Hospital in Kentville, the contract for the first phase of the \$70 million Cape Breton Regional Hospital, \$110.9 million for the construction of the new Halifax Infirmary and a commitment of \$5 million toward the first phase of a campaign to expand All Saints Hospital in Springhill.

Opposition leader Vince MacLean refused to appear before the commission. He gave the commissioners high marks for their hard work and diligence in tackling the thorny issue but remarked that it was just another example of "election year window dressing."

McDonough, a strong supporter of community health care initiatives and prevention programs, expressed doubt

that the Buchanan government "is any more interested in health care reform today than it was four years ago when it permanently suspended the work of the Select Committee on Health."

The politicians were not alone in the fear that the commission was more show than substance. Dr. Douglas Henshaw, president of the Medical Society of Nova Scotia, voiced the same worry in his presentation at a Commission sitting in Dartmouth. "We have to look at medicine beyond the next election, beyond the next government and into the next generation," he says.

Henshaw contended that there was no crisis in health care or health care funding. "What we do have is a crisis in government. The blame must be shouldered by the politicians and political parties, each with an agenda that focuses no further ahead than the next election."

Sorting out the actual costs of health care and finding ways to reduce them are further confused by the number of government departments involved. A senior citizen in hospital falls into the budget of the department of health but the same individual released to recuperate in a nursing home becomes the responsibility of the department of community services. In like manner, an injured worker is the responsibility of the department of labour for workers' compensation but switches to the department of education for a retraining program to return to work.

Dr. Audley Bodurtha, president of the Victoria General Hospital medical staff, told the commissioners that control of the hospital (which receives almost 25 per cent of the province's health care budget) by a number of different government departments makes it difficult to run the hospital effectively.

Dr. Earle Reid, the only medical doctor on the commission panel, agreed, calling management at the VG a "God-awful mess" that should be cleaned up before any more dollars are spent there to upgrade facilities.

The situation at the Nova Scotia Hospital was also raised before the royal commission in a number of submissions. But the low morale, shortage of psychiatrists and psychiatric social workers and allegations of poor patient care and administration, which prompted the resignation of Akhtar, formed only a small part of the 8,000 pages of the commission's transcript.

These problems, plus the political dilemma of the announcement in January that Dr. Henry Morgentaler was granted a licence to practise medicine in the province and planned to open an abortion clinic in the Halifax area, are certain to frustrate the government's attempts to keep health issues on the back burner.

Location and size of school subject of public discussion

After years of lobbying, the Acadian community in P.E.I is getting a French school but it's already raising questions

by Heather Moore

A \$7.1 million French school, touted by supporters as the answer to preserving the Acadian culture on Prince Edward Island, will be built to provide French language education for students from pre-school through Grade 12. But the school, which will include a community centre, will be located in Charlottetown, more than 100 kilometres away from the centre of the Acadian population.

The federal government, through the department of the secretary of state, is committed to covering 75 per cent of the eligible cost incurred by the province in constructing the centre to a maximum contribution of \$5.3 million.

La Société Saint-Thomas D'Aquin, which represents Island Acadians, has lobbied for a French school since 1981. The society's director general, Daniel Bourgeois, is thrilled with the approval for the school. He says Acadians living in the West Prince area (where the largest concentration of French-speaking Islanders live) had previously requested a French school but were turned down twice by government, first in 1983 and then in 1986. "We were very pleased," says Bourgeois, who agrees that a French school in each region would be an ideal situation. However, he says the justified demand is currently in Charlottetown.

Opposition to the new school has been both vocal and written, expressed in letters to the editors of Island newspapers. A well-known Islander, John (Jake) Cullen, who calls himself the Island's watchdog, says he supports equal rights for everyone and questions this French school on the grounds that other groups are not getting the same — as he sees it — privileged treatment. "Many Irish and Scottish people will question this request of the Acadians," he writes, while noting that the same provincial government "lets our city schools fall apart" and allows children to attend school in mobile classrooms that he describes as "firetraps."

There's a strong element of anti-French bias in other letters to editors. One letter, unsigned, asks readers to support the Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada and lists 12 different examples of how the French are favoured across the country. It implies that there's

a conspiracy for a French takeover.

"Who will be teaching in this proposed new facility," the letter asks. "Will it be like the DVA bringing in many people from the province of Quebec who will demand French in the banks, schools, post offices?"

These attitudes don't bother Gerald Denis, the head of the Charlottetown planning committee for the new school. Denis, a native of Quebec and an Islander for the past six years, says, "We don't want to create a ghetto; this school is not exclusive."



Denis, left, and Kinnear: reversing trends

But a nerve is touched in many Islanders with the mention of the department of veteran affairs. Jim MacNeill, publisher/editor of *The Eastern Graphic* in Montague who is not against the school in principle, said in an editorial: "The reality is that this school and community centre has been promoted by a small group of Charlottetown area franco-phones who have access to some of the power structure in the federal bureaucracy. Many have come here because of the DVA. The Ghiz government has happily gone along with the proposal."

Many observers feel that that's the real issue and people are reluctant to speak out for fear of accusations of racism.

And if MacNeill is not against the idea in principle, he makes fairly straightforward criticisms of the size of the

proposed school and centre. He calls it "absolutely outrageous" and "a boondoggle of the worst kind." The school/community centre will have a total area of 60,000 square feet of which 35,000 square feet will be used as classroom space. It's planned so it would be able to accommodate between 150 and 200 students.

"But how many students will be registered when the centre opens?" he asks. "Well, the planners are hoping for 70 the first year but have reduced this when they say, 'we feel that 50 students is a more realistic figure.'"

MacNeill points out that the present French school in Charlottetown has 31 students. Even if their numbers were doubled, he says, the new facility would still be far too large. "What is being proposed just in the school section of the centre," MacNeill writes, "are 12 classrooms, laboratories, a computer room and space for industrial arts, home economics, visual arts, music and health. There will also be a teachers' room as well as space for guidance counselling and administration... Schools in this province have about 170 square feet of space for each student in senior schools and 125 square feet for students in elementary schools. The French school will be equivalent in size to a 200-student high school or a 280-student elementary school. That's a long way from the present 31 French students."

La Société will now support the planning committee for the centre and will be represented by former lieutenant governor J. A. Doiron. The planning committee consists of a 13-member board which will draft the final plans along with a delegation from the provincial government.

Committee head Denis echoes comments made by Bourgeois in stressing there is a need to provide French language education and to preserve the culture. "There is no comparison to the French Immersion Program, which already exists on the Island," he says.

He acknowledges that the present French school in Charlottetown, L'école Francois-Buote, has only 31 students registered but when the new facility opens, perhaps as early as the fall of 1990, Denis predicts there will be no problem filling the classroom space.

Pat Kinnear, a representative of Canadian Parents For French, says that DVA employees and their families will benefit from the school but he believes one of the main objectives of the school will be to give native Acadians an incentive to retain their language and culture.

"The school could reverse the trend of Acadians losing their language — these students will start in kindergarten and go through the entire system in French."

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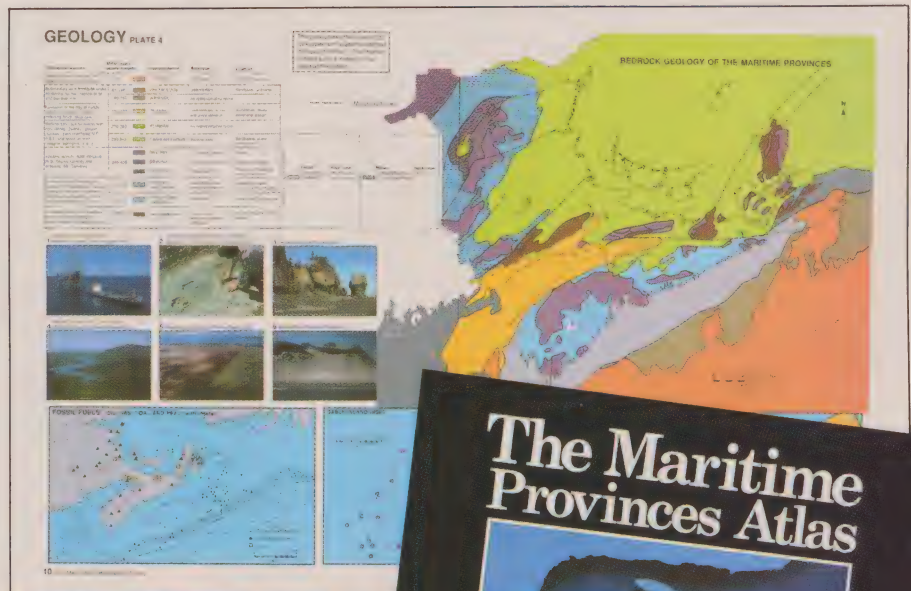
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Research for life

by Valerie Mansour

Sitting in his comfortable vice-presidential office at Acadia University, Dr. Kelvin Ogilvie beams as he explains his scientific research. Gesturing as he speaks, the animated 46-year-old throws around terms like RNA and retroviruses, which for most are just vague and haunting memories from classroom science. Ogilvie found high school science exciting and, although he is hardly a household name, his continuing fascination with the components of cells has made this Nova Scotia born biochemist famous in scientific circles.

Ogilvie, a native of Summerville, Hants County, made the headlines last summer when the scientific community accepted his discovery of synthesizing an RNA (ribonucleic acid) molecule in a laboratory. It was the culmination of 20 years of hard, competitive work which he feels will result in positive medical advances. "It was my long-term objective, my personal Mount Everest," says Ogilvie, who is now academic vice-president at Acadia, his alma mater. "It provides a tool that others will use to further unravel the secrets of the cell."

Ogilvie says the ability to synthesize RNA (ribonucleic acid) is going to allow researchers to learn more in a broad range of areas. There is, for instance, a batch of diseases that are caused by viruses called "retroviruses." Their genetic material is entirely RNA. They inject their RNA into a human cell and it begins to take over the cell's machinery, making it produce hundreds of thousands of copies, causing life threatening diseases like polio, AIDS and certain leukemias.

"By using the chemical procedures I've developed through this discovery, we can chemically synthesize a piece of

Kelvin Ogilvie's research led to a discovery that could change the way diseases such as AIDS and cancer are treated and cured







MICHAEL CREAGEN

Ogilvie's discovery, in which he chemically synthesized RNA, has long occupied researchers in every major country around the world

RNA that is complementary to the viral genetic RNA," explains Ogilvie. "It will stick to it, neutralize it and stop the virus from reproducing — a synthetic vaccine, if you like."

And Ogilvie says he's not merely speculating. "I'm telling you now what is actually being done."

Ogilvie's work will also go a long way in solving genetic defects, an area he feels the public should hear more about. "Let's suppose you've got a defective gene and it's producing a message that will make the cell produce a protein that will cause you a problem," he says. "We could synthesize another piece of RNA to neutralize that message." And, he adds, the right message can be made and put in the cell so the cell can produce it.

Before returning to Acadia in 1987, Ogilvie was the director of the office of biotechnology at McGill University in Montreal. He says his RNA discovery will be useful in this field as well, possibly leading to the development of human insulin. "Many of these kinds of objectives are obvious to people in the scientific world, but you can't do them till you've got the tools," says Ogilvie. "Ours is an enabling discovery. You can see that down the road there's going to be a lot of practical applications of this kind of development."

Ogilvie and his research team weren't

alone in their work on the RNA molecule. The search to synthesize RNA has long occupied researchers in every major country around the world, some of whom had started a decade earlier than Ogilvie. "It's as bloodthirsty a competition as I'm

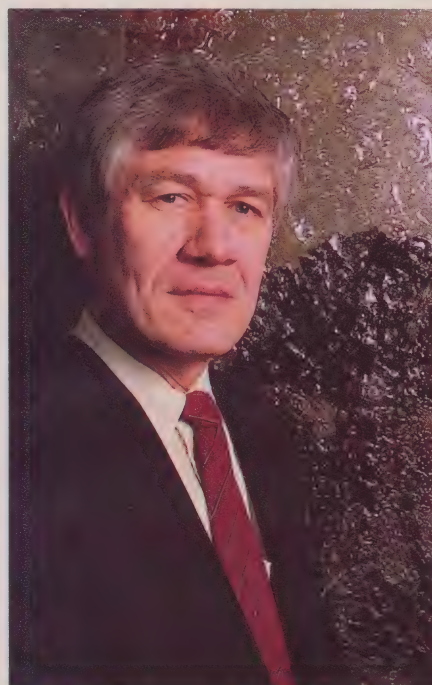
aware exists anywhere in anything," he says. Ogilvie is now waiting to see what the others will do. "It's important that they succeed as well because the more different approaches you have, the more knowledge base you have down the road when new problems arrive."

"They won't and shouldn't stop working," he says charitably but adds, "it's a hell of a lot more fun being first."

Ogilvie says his work presented both dramatic advances and frustrations along the way. "It was like a giant jigsaw puzzle and you had to work on each part. But it was always exciting. The goal was always there and nobody was sitting on top of the mountain yet." For the first 10 years Ogilvie worked in the lab directly on the project and for the last 10 he worked with his research team of seven graduate students.

Although Ogilvie had returned to the Maritimes by the time his discovery was announced in August, he did all of his research at universities outside this region.

"Aside from the fact he's here now, the province can't claim too much credit for him," says Bob Fournier, Dalhousie University vice-president of research. Like many others, Fournier, an oceanographer and popular science broadcaster, is concerned that Atlantic universities cannot afford to provide a setting for



MICHAEL CREAGEN

Fournier values curiosity-driven research

serious scientific research.

Ogilvie earned his BSc at Acadia, but went elsewhere for his graduate work, a common pattern for students. He studied and taught first at the University of Manitoba and then, in 1974, started at McGill. He says the only place his entire work could have been done in the Maritimes was at Dalhousie. Acadia would have been sufficient for the research, but it does not provide the same competitive level necessary for his standard of work. Ogilvie says McGill offered something that's not always available here — exceptionally high quality graduate students to work as researchers.

"Where I see the role of an Acadia is to give a sense of excitement to the students to go off to these graduate schools," says Ogilvie, who doesn't believe every university should offer the same research options. "The university system is a spectrum. We can't afford to be a carbon copy."

Although Ogilvie believes some important scientific advances can be made without huge monetary investments, he acknowledges a serious problem — universities in the Maritimes are underfunded and, consequently, there is less research done here than there could be.

Fournier, who also chairs the Provincial Council on Applied Science and Technology, concurs. He says although good work is being done in the region, research is not strongly regarded by government and industry as an important investment. "Even when we attract high quality people, we aren't equipped for them. The labs are below standard."

Despite funding inadequacies, universities in the Atlantic region are doing research in numerous areas. At Dalhousie the dental school is investigating new denture materials; important cardiology research is happening at the medical school; the neuroscience department is researching advancements in the science of the brain; the business schools are developing new software.

In Canada, most funding for university research, including Ogilvie's, comes from the federal government. It's distributed mainly through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the National Science and Engineering Research Council, the Medical Research Council and Health and Welfare Canada.

Provincial support varies across the country, with the lowest amounts provided in the Atlantic. Of the 10 provinces, New Brunswick rates seventh, followed by Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island. For instance, in 1987, the Nova Scotia government invested \$804,000 in research at its universities. The total, including federal government grants, was just over \$30 million. The previous year \$1.9 million was invested, out of a total of over \$25 million and in 1985 the province was responsible for \$714,000 of the \$24 million total put

towards university research in Nova Scotia.

John D'Orsay, executive director of the Nova Scotia Confederation of University Faculty Associations, says, "In Quebec investing in research at universities is seen as legitimate government activity; it's not seen as that here." Part of the problem is that the results are not always something the voter can see, he says.

Although there is research activity outside the universities, critics say the universities are most severely affected. "The place where we're hurting is in universities and I think the situation is getting worse," Fournier says. "We have to convince the premier on down that science and technology are areas that have to be nurtured and developed." He says governments tend to be bottom line oriented. "You can fund something for a year or two and nothing happens. You have to be prepared to accept the losers as well as the winners."

Often it takes several years between a discovery and the development of a commercial product. And sometimes there is no specific goal in mind. Fournier says it has to be understood that what he calls "curiosity-driven" research is worthwhile, because of the unpredictable future benefits.

Ogilvie illustrates this with a story of work he began in 1970 on a molecule he thought would be a key to building up the RNA molecule. "To make a long story short, it was a bloody disaster for making RNA, but it was really a novel molecule." He knew no one had designed a molecule to act against viruses and, although as a chemist he was treading into the biologists' sphere, he worked away at it for several years. By the early '80s he was granted patents for these compounds and one is now on the market in Europe to treat a virus that affects AIDS patients.

Whether it is "curiosity-driven" or applied research, it is increasingly difficult to do this kind of work in the Atlantic region. D'Orsay says professors have gone to work elsewhere in Canada or the U.S. because of the funding problems here. Although university jobs are in short supply and there's not a lot of movement, obviously the best people move most easily.

The funding situation at American universities is healthier since the huge defence industry supplies much of the work. But with greater demand in the U.S. for engineers and scientists, the effect on Canadian institutions is this so-called "brain drain."

Of course, other institutions, outside the university setting do research as well. In Halifax alone, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans along with its Bedford Institute of Oceanography, the National Research Council and the Nova Scotia Research Foundation are involved in worthwhile projects. But, even in a general sense, Ogilvie says Canada's investment in research is very low —



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about 2.5 per cent of its Gross National Product (GNP), while other countries spend closer to three per cent, a considerable difference in dollar terms. "The level of investment in research and development in Canada is pitifully small compared to that required of the industrialized nations," he says.

During last summer's provincial election campaign, Premier John Buchanan said Nova Scotia spends more than \$465 million annually on research and development, more than half in federal laboratories. At the same time he announced a \$100 million program for

science and technology. Both Ogilvie and Fournier are cautiously optimistic the program will be put to good use. "I'm pleased by the announcement but remain concerned about the way it may get implemented," says Ogilvie.

As well, the province contributed \$2.8 million to a new Gene Probe Laboratory at Dalhousie University last August. Gene probing is a form of molecular biology in which DNA is identified and then used to change living organisms. The genetic material can increase productivity and resistance to disease and will ultimately make the commercial fishing sector more

competitive.


And last August industry got involved with supporting a Dalhousie proposal for fisheries research under the "National Networks Centres of Excellence" program. Each of three major fish processing companies, National Sea, Clearwater Fine Foods and Fishery Products International, contributed about \$1 million to be spent over five years. Dalhousie, which also requested funding for cardiology and bio materials research, still awaits word. The federal program has received 158 proposals to spend its \$240 million budget.

Fournier finds the atmosphere in the business community is improving, although his experience with this project shows it is still a struggle. "We cajoled, encouraged and insisted. It took a year of lobbying and talking," says Fournier. "In the end is a realization that these kinds of things are important. Companies are becoming more aware of the needs and are prepared to spend the money."

Industry traditionally has not done its part in funding research. According to Ogilvie, its participation is one of the poorest in the western world. "Only two per cent of businesses in Canada spend any money on research and development," he says. Ogilvie feels it is essential to develop knowledge-based industries and is prepared to go on a crusade to push it. (Ogilvie speaks frequently and currently has engagements lined up to speak to everyone from high school science teachers to the national meeting of the Canadian fertilizer industry.)

Ogilvie hopes he can use his influence in the way such money is spent in the research area. But Ogilvie the scientist is also an administrator now and his interests will be divided. He was lured back to Acadia in 1987 to be academic vice-president. He says like most Atlantic Canadians he wanted to come home. "There is an attraction only Maritimers understand. We spend the first 20 years of our lives trying to get away and the rest of it trying to get back."

Ogilvie wants to be part of what he sees as major changes at the country's universities. "It is my perception that universities across this country are facing a very difficult period and the traditional approaches to the way universities have developed are not going to work much longer."

But while he will be busy as an administrator, Ogilvie is not ready to completely abandon the role for which he is renowned. Perhaps international competitions are no longer in the picture, but Ogilvie plans to continue his research. "There are things that I want to do and I want to do them at my own pace." Educators in the region can only hope Ogilvie and others will have the research environment necessary to do their work. 



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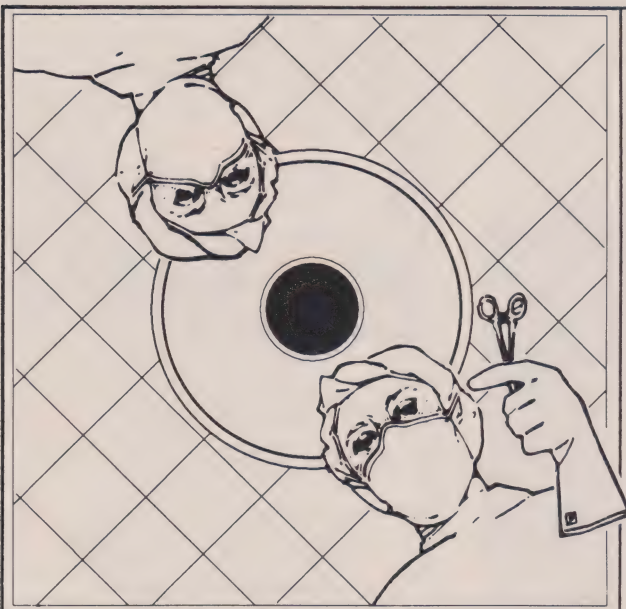
**Her Excellency Madame Jeanne Sauvé
Governor General of Canada**

11 a.m. Friday, April 7, 1989

Seton Academic Centre Mount Saint Vincent University

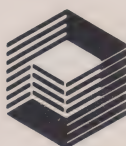
Madame Sauvé will be visiting the Mount campus in conjunction with the university's Women in Science initiative which includes the establishment of the Jeanne Sauvé Chair for Women in Science and the related Centre for Women in Science.

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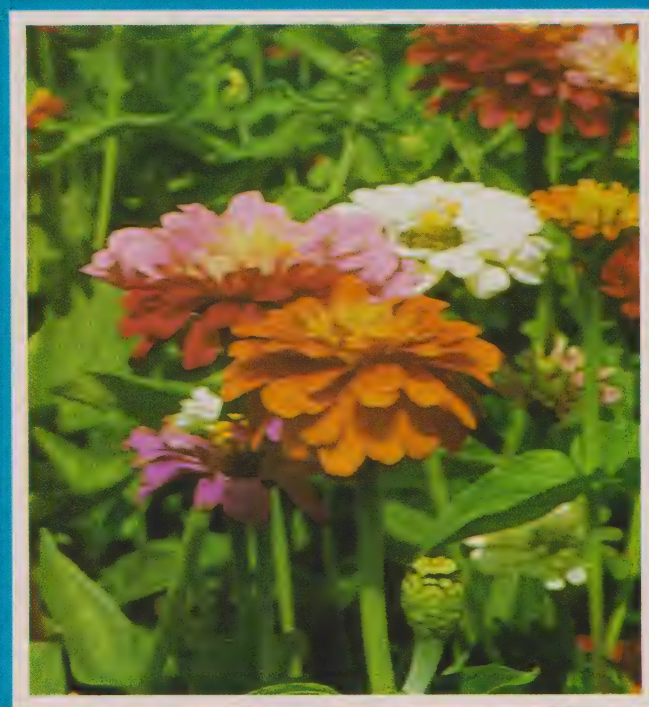
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BEST TIME TO SOW

Showcase of colour

The garden wizardry of Charlottetown physician Gordon Lea frequently brings motorists and passersby to a standstill

by Marcia Porter

The lawns at 1 Green St. in Charlottetown, P.E.I. are still covered in snow when Dr. Gordon Lea pokes his head out his back door for a look at the crocuses, and the other tough little spring flowers that have pushed their way to life above ground.

"It's great excitement when things start to appear," says the 75-year-old, semi-retired physician who's been exercising his green thumb for more than 40 years. After a lot of trial and error the Lea property, which is just next door to the premier's house, is one of the most celebrated in the city.

"I was born and brought up on a farm," says Lea who spent his youth in Victoria, a picturesque village on the Island's south shore. "We enjoy this type of thing. Over the years we got more and more interested in gardening and now it's our main extracurricular hobby."

Lea's own garden has come a long way since 1948, when the Leas set up house on Green Street. A neighbour with a creative flare for landscaping helped the couple get started. "I had never had any concept of what one did," says Lea, whose mother did most of the gardening at home. "I had never given it any thought."

Working outdoors nurturing flowers and shrubbery was ideal therapy for a young, busy physician specializing in internal medicine. "It was quite relaxing. Outside things take on a whole different look."

The Leas' exuberant four young children never created turmoil in the flower beds even when the property was a meeting place for all the neighbourhood kids. The love of plant life was passed on to the younger Leas who now ask their dad for help each spring. "I help them get their gardens organized," Lea says.

For Gordon and his wife Mary, the end of the winter doldrums comes with the appearance of the little yellow *eranthis* buds that pop up through the snow in early March, followed by the blooming of the mauve and blue crocuses. The brilliant show of colour lasts as late as



The showcase garden is the perfect playground for Gordon and Mary Lea's grandchildren

November, when a chill in the air forces the last petals off the roses.

This colour isn't accidental. It's a careful display of skill, of knowing what to plant, when to plant, where to plant, of being able to envision the completed picture. "What we grow is determined by where we are," Lea explains. "We have a lot of shade so there are many things we can't grow like annuals or vegetables."

Instead they concentrate on flowers like tulips and daffodils, roses, begonias — a family favourite — and the primulas. "Everything has been selected," Lea explains. "There's colour everywhere. There are no gaps. You have to plan because what you plant will show up in five years' time."

Gardening is a year-round hobby for Lea, who begins work on the garden in the fall with the planting of hundreds of bulbs. "You plant in October when the weather is decent. As far as I'm concerned it's one of the nicest jobs. There's nothing better than being outside on a

warm fall day." Tulips, crocuses and other bulbs go into the ground before it freezes, ready for a spring delivery.

The showy but delicate begonias are started indoors in late February or early March. After a few weeks he places them under a bright light and a few weeks later moves them to pots outdoors. He prefers to keep his begonias in pots so he can juggle colour combinations.

Waiting is all that remains after the begonias are started. Everything else is growing underground. When the *eranthis*, crocuses and snow drops — the earliest of the spring flowers — die, out come the tulips, the yellow daffodils and the primulas, with their tiered petals and pale green leaves.

The stone wall marking the Lea property is a mass of blue when the forget-me-nots bloom in early June. These little flowers catch the eyes of area residents and motorists who stop to compliment Lea on his garden wizardry. "We get all sorts of visitors and I appreciate it," he

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says. Also admired are the many roses which occupy a prominent space on the front lawn.

Lea pulls on his overalls or something casual and spends about four to six hours daily in the garden starting in mid-April when the grounds dry up. "Every year there's a major project and, when it looks like there's absolutely nothing I can do, by fall I'm engrossed."

But not all those hours are spent stooped in a bed of flowers. "Sometimes a lot of time is taken just standing and looking," he admits. "Every gardener knows what I mean."



Blooming forget-me-nots take over in June



Early spring flowers end winter doldrums

When he's not tending to the family gardens, Lea can be found roaming the acre of annuals, perennials and lily beds at Government House, the home of the Island's lieutenant governor. He's chaired the gardening committee for the last eight or nine years. "It's a very interesting hobby," says Lea. "It takes a lot of advance planning. We meet in January to start ordering and get an idea of what we want."

For novice gardeners just getting their thumbs green, Lea's advice is to "feel your way through. You can be told an awful lot." For Lea, gardening has helped him stay young. "I'm not one to be self-analytical," he says. "I just like it. I think it's good to have an interest that your family can share."

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Blooms from April to October

A backyard garden as spectacular as Halifax's Public Gardens can be yours with a little planning and hard work



Gardeners plant between 30,000 and 35,000 bulbs at Halifax's Public Gardens each fall

There appears to be some kind of voodoo magic attached to the continuous displays of blossoms and blooms at Halifax's Public Gardens. Everyone loves the beauty and fragrance of those flowers but few of us have the courage to try and grow them at home. With the help of experts from around the Maritimes, however, even the most amateur backyard gardener can uncover some of the magic. Through simple practices such as planting bulbs in the fall and using a wide variety of perennials accented with annuals and flowering shrubs, a bounty of blooms in the backyard can be yours from April to October.

The first step to successful gardening is to know your soil and your yard, says Anne Butler of Peacock's Nursery in Saint John, N.B. Measure the area to be planted and discover which sides of the garden will be sunny or shady, wet or dry. Some varieties of plants prefer sunny, well-drained environments to shady, moist ones. Also take a close look at the condi-

tion of your soil. Most soil will benefit from an application of fertilizer high in phosphorous and potash (the last two numbers in any fertilizer mixture).

Planning is the most critical and often the most difficult part of creating a garden that will bloom continuously. Start by drawing a diagram of what you want the garden to look like throughout the growing season. Most Atlantic nurseries are more than willing to offer advice as to the sequence of blooms and the mature height of the plants. They also put out catalogues that provide lists of flowers and shrubs including their flowering times, colour, sunlight and moisture needs and mature height.

The height of plants is significant because taller plants will frame and enhance smaller ones. Stephen King, assistant superintendent of Halifax's parks and grounds department, suggests using flowering shrubs to add colour and texture throughout the season and as a backdrop for other flowering plants. At the Public Gardens, a filtered view is accomplished

using trees that frame and surround groupings of flowers.

Butler suggests building around a focal point. For a garden along the foundation of your home, "try using taller trees and shrubs around your front entrance to draw the eye towards it," she says.

Even the most carefully planned gardens may need some adaptation from year to year. But once people "finally get their garden the way they like it, they usually keep it like that," says Ron Frid of Jewell's Country Gardens near Charlottetown, P.E.I.

To ensure blooms as early as April, planting must actually begin in the fall. Tulips, crocuses, daffodils, hyacinths and anemones are all bulb plants that need time underground to prepare for shoot growth. King says the gardeners at the Public Gardens plant between 30,000 and 35,000 bulbs in late October and early November. "If they're planted too early, bulbs could freeze in an early frost but if they're too late, they could rot," he says. King suggests covering the planted bulbs

COURTESY OF PARKS & GROUNDS DIVISION, CITY OF HALIFAX

WAYNE BARRETT



with spruce or fir boughs after one or two freezes to protect them from rain and the freeze/thaw cycle.

The first blooms to emerge from their snowy hibernation are greeted with the most excitement. After a long, cold winter the first crocuses and anemones appear almost magically through the melting snow. King says they show splashes of colour best if planted together in small groups.

Hardy varieties of daffodils arrive next along with the first groups of tulips. Tulips can be planted in sequence of blooms that will last all spring long — early varieties like General De Wet, whitehock and single earlys are followed by the later square-shaped Darwins. The gardeners at the Public Gardens recover around 25 per cent of the more expensive bulbs each year to dry for the next season.

April is the time to start planting the hardy perennial plants that flower year after year. In the early spring, perennials help fill a garden's need for colour until annuals arrive. Perennials can be grown

from seed, but buying field perennials (plants already grown by nurseries) is an easier, although more expensive, option. Frid says "variety is the key" to keeping perennials in continuous bloom. Few perennials flower for more than a month, so it's important to plant a variety and to know when they will bloom. As the rest of the garden must be planned around these yearly visitors, keep in mind their colour and height.

Light is an important factor to take into consideration when planning perennials. Asters, coral bells, daisies and lavender all like sunny conditions, while violets, day lilies, primrose and columbine enjoy the shade. Groundcovers like moss pink, thyme, rock cress and lily-of-the-valley will add another dimension to your garden as well.

Annuals help fill the garden with blooms throughout most of the summer. Their blossoms are in blazing colour from mid-June until the frost arrives. Annuals grow quickly from seed (in six to eight weeks) and can be changed from

year to year. At the Public Gardens, the gardeners use bedding plants and potting plants grown in their greenhouses. Early in the season there are pansies, dusty miller, violas, geraniums, marigolds, nicotiana, impatiens and petunias.

King suggests planting annual flowers in large groupings, a technique called "mass planting," to make the most of the flowers' colours. Good examples of mass planting are the Gardens floral carpet beds, celebrating events in Halifax during the year. Last year the beds commemorated Halifax City Hall's 100th anniversary and the Neptune Theatre's 25th anniversary.

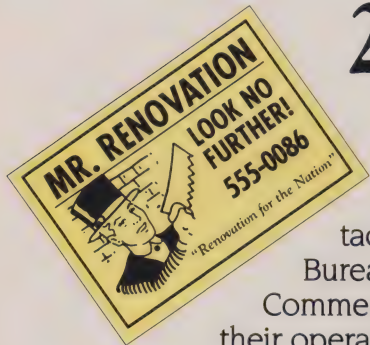
The Halifax Public Gardens is an intimidating but spectacular example of how to keep your own garden in continuous bloom from early spring until late fall. Butler says it can be done — by any amateur backyard gardener — with a little hard work and research. And don't hesitate to ask your local nursery for help, she says. "It's important to consult with them if you're having any problems." ☞

Ten Renovation Mistakes

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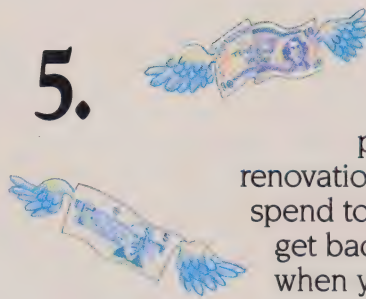
3. Always include any particularly large pieces of furnishings in your new floorplan. Otherwise, you could find everything out of tune later on.



4. Safety first and last. Always be safety conscious no matter who you're dealing with. Every day before the workers leave, run a quick inspection around the house to see that everything's alright.



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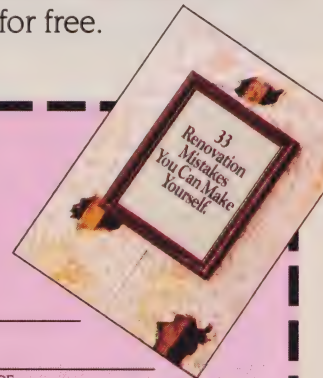
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And the green grass grows...

Knowing how to mow and water and when to sow and fertilize will give you a lush carpet for a lawn

by Tom Mason

A lush green lawn is the natural backdrop for a carefully landscaped property but it is also the most elusive. For the average homeowner, perfecting the lawn has a lot to do with giving up weekends or spending a lot of money. It doesn't have to be that way.

If you're serious about getting your grass up to the standards of your green-thumbed neighbours, chances are you're already spending enough time on your yard. Like many well-intentioned brown-thumbs, however, you may be wasting your time on the wrong things.

The condition of the soil is the biggest factor affecting your grass. The pH and nutrient content must be at optimum levels for your lawn to be at its best. Ian Swan, assistant laboratory analyst with Nova Scotia's department of agriculture, says a soil test should be the first course of action. Although it's possible to buy a do-it-yourself kit, he suggests contacting a local department of agriculture representative for containers and instructions. Soil testing services are available in each of the four provinces, he says.

As Atlantic Canadian soils tend to be acidic, most lawns will benefit from an application of lime. If you have bare patches on your lawn or you've moved into a new house with no lawn at all, you may first want to apply fresh topsoil. Don't settle for clean fill — the best topsoil is a mixture of one third peat moss or compost, one third sand and one third regular soil.

Most people think Kentucky Bluegrass is the best available grass seed but a mixture of several grasses with a low percentage of weed seed is actually a better bet for our climate, says Keith Dexter of Halifax's Maritime Lawn and Garden. He recommends a mix called County Green, which is 40 per cent Kentucky Bluegrass, 40 per cent Creeping Red Fescue and 20 per cent Annual Rye. Kentucky Bluegrass is an excellent cool

climate grass that thrives in our spring and fall weather but tends to go into a dormant state in the heat of summer. Red Fescue, poor in cool weather, will come into its own in summer. Annual Rye, which comes up first, acts as a protective shade for the new Kentucky Bluegrass and then dies off. For best results, plant grass seed in the fall or early spring when the ground is cool and moist.

One of the common mistakes homeowners make is that they don't follow their own instincts, Dexter says. Formulated yearly maintenance schedules can be fatal with our unpredictable spring weather and variations in moisture levels. "Just because it's the second week in May and the books say it's time to fertilize doesn't mean you should," he says. "If there's been a lot of rain in April, delay your maintenance schedule until your lawn is no longer wet and soggy."

Yearly maintenance should begin with dethatching, the process of getting rid of the decayed grass and debris that builds up on the lawn and hinders air and water circulation. It may not be necessary to dethatch every year but if your lawn feels spongy when you walk across it, excessive thatch is usually the cause. A light raking in spring will remove the excess or you can rent a motorized dethatcher.

For many Atlantic Canadians, the burning of grass as a way to get rid of thatch has become a spring ritual. Swan doesn't recommend it. "We don't know of any advantage to doing it," he says, and the heat can cause damage to the crown of the grass.

Soil can sometimes become compacted to the point that poor air and water circulation will affect the growth of grass. Aerating the soil will help. Like dethatching, aerating doesn't have to be done every year but it should be done at least one year in three. A motorized aerator pushes hollow metal tubes into the ground and lifts out small plugs of earth, loosening the soil.

The first yearly dose of fertilizer should be applied before the grass has begun its growth cycle but not until it's safe to walk on the grass without damage. "If the soil pH is low, apply lime at the same time as the fertilizer," Dexter says. "Ignore the old myth that you must fertilize and lime a week apart. For best results, apply a second dose of fertilizer about six weeks later and another in the fall."

Fertilizer should contain three ingredients: nitrogen, which aids in the greening process of your lawn; phosphorus to promote root growth; and potassium to help the plants' metabolism and build resistance to disease. Fertilizer bags list the percentages of these three ingredients on the label. Dexter recommends a 20/10/5 mix for this region — 20 per cent nitrogen, 10 per cent phosphorus and 5 per cent potassium; the other 65 per cent of the fertilizer is known as the carrier and is usually sand. It's important to use a high quality fertilizer which will release the nutrients slowly, over a period of

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weeks, to prevent brown spots and burning.

Although crabgrass is one of the most common weeds in North America, it's rare in Atlantic Canada. Moss is the most widespread lawn problem in our area, due to the high acidity of our soil. Bringing the pH level up should clear up most moss problems but liming should be part of an annual maintenance program. Dandelions, another common Atlantic weed, can be controlled by applying a weed killer in the heat of the summer when the weeds are active. A second application may be necessary later in the summer if the problem persists.

As pests can make a meal out of the lawn, inspect below the surface of the grass occasionally. White grubs and Junebug larvae are the most common lawn pests in this region and may require an insecticide to keep under control.

Two other simple, but often overlooked factors are worth considering — mowing and watering. Even if you never dethatch or aerate, you're probably going

to mow and water, so they should be done correctly.

David Pace, of Evergreen Landscaping Ltd. in Halifax, says it's important to set the mower blade at the right cutting height for the type of grass you have. Most grass should not be cut shorter than two inches. "If you cut it lower, when there's a hot spell, you'll burn the grass," he says. The blades of grass actually shade the soil.

In summer or after fertilizing, mow at least once a week. If you allow your grass to get longer than normal it's a good idea to raise the cutting height of your mower the first time you mow again. Make sure the mower blade is kept sharp so that it cuts cleanly and doesn't hack the grass. Also, don't mow in the same direction every time.

The average lawn needs about one to one-and-a-half inches of water per week in summer. Too much water promotes excessive thatch, disease and weed growth. Dexter suggests setting a jar near the water sprinkler. When the jar fills to

one to one-and-a-half inches, you've watered enough for a week. Time this procedure and you'll know how long you need to water next week. A more elaborate system involves keeping a rain gauge in the backyard to measure the amount of rain that has fallen during the week. If less than the optimum, you can make up the difference by sprinkling.

The best time of day to water is early in the morning so the excess can evaporate. Afternoon is not as effective due to increased evaporation, but during a particularly hot day a light afternoon sprinkling can reduce heat stress. "People think they should water in the evening," says Pace. "That's wrong — that allows fungus and mildew to grow in the wet grass."

If you follow all these steps and are still having problems getting your lawn up to snuff, ask the experts for advice. Don't be afraid to bring a grass sample or one of those troublesome lawn pests with you. That lush green carpet surrounding your property will be worth it. ☒



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Knowing when to sow

Second-guessing a cold night or a late frost in June can be an agonizing experience or just part of the gardening game

by John Wishart

Many use the phases of the moon as their guide. Others look to the size of new growth on poplar trees. And some remember when the best barometer was how cold the soil felt on their bare bottoms.

Farmers and gardeners in Atlantic Canada have as many ways of determining the best time to sow a garden as the seed catalogues have varieties. But whether they consult the moon or *The Old Farmer's Almanac*, expert gardeners do agree on two things: common sense is the best rule of (green) thumb and, once you have a system that works, stick with it.

Thousands of Atlantic Canadians will be planting gardens soon, some for the first time. They have to worry about soil suitability, mulches, fertilizers and weed control. But first, they have to get the seeds in the ground. For them, second-guessing cold nights and the threat of frost can be an agonizing experience. But for the old pros, it's all part of the gardening game.

Gerald and Ruth Walsh of Moncton, N.B. have been gardening for close to 60 years and passing on their knowledge through a popular local newspaper column and radio show. Ruth recalls a bit of old English gardening folklore. "When the English gentleman farmer went out to the barley fields, he would drop his pants and sit down on the ground. If he didn't feel too uncomfortable, it was safe to plant." Gerald says the date of sowing a garden is a matter of choice. "Some people think planting should be done early; some prefer to wait until that late frost."

"With us, it usually depends on whether the tiller will start," Ruth says.

Leandre Vienneau of St. André, N.B. has been gardening for more than 50 years and he still puts faith in the phases of the moon. "I've always followed that pretty close," he admits. The moon theory states that above-ground crops (such as corn, cucumbers, beans) should be planted when the moon is between new and full and below-ground crops (pota-



A cold night in June won't harm spinach toes, carrots, turnips) when the moon is waning, between full and last quarter.

Clara LeBlanc, district agriculturalist with the provincial department of agriculture in Moncton, has tried to determine whether there's actually some mysterious truth behind planting by the moon's phases. "I've come to the conclusion there's nothing scientific about gardening by the moon but I don't think it will do any harm either."

Other gardeners take their cue from the signs of nature.

George LaBelle, of Cocagne, N.B. knows it's time to sow when the leaves on his poplar trees show some growth. Labelle's trees aren't just any old trees — they've been featured in a new book titled *Great Trees of New Brunswick*. Carl Harvey, operator of Harvey's Vegetables along the Saint John River at Maugerville (the roadside market with the huge potato out front), is even more precise with his popular poplar saying: "It's not time to plant until the leaf on the poplar tree is as large as a mouse's ear."

Oddly enough, experienced farmers like Maurice Dubois, operator of Strawberry Farm Products Ltd. of Scoudouc, N.B. agree that city dwellers have a jump on their country cousins when it comes to being first in the ground. "In the cities, you've got the heat trapped by the asphalt

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HOMES

and released from the furnaces...the ground is usually warmer than in rural areas." George Scott of Scott's Nurseries in Lincoln, N.B. says the protection offered by trees and buildings gives city gardeners a two-week headstart. But the rural gardens catch up because they receive more sunlight during the summer months.

Despite the urge to be first in the ground, Dubois cautions first-time gardeners against early planting. "A person really doesn't gain much by trying to cheat the elements," he suggests. "We commercial growers do it because the market demands it. We're gambling growers, but the home gardener doesn't have to be." By starting your plants outdoors at the end of April instead of the first of June, you may gain only a week of real growth, he estimates.

The people at Vesey's Seeds Ltd. in York, P.E.I. have been selling seeds and advising Maritime farmers for 50 years. Assistant manager Barry Metcalfe says growing conditions vary greatly in Atlantic Canada. Gardeners in the Annapolis Valley and Fredericton areas usually get the jump on farmers in Cape Breton and Newfoundland, for instance. A good average planting date for most gardeners is the Victoria Day weekend in May.

Some "toughies," as Gerald Walsh describes members of the cabbage family, can be planted much earlier in the spring. They include cabbage, cauliflower, Swiss chard, spinach, lettuce and Brussels sprouts. Potatoes, onions, turnips and peas can also be planted "as soon as it is dry enough that you can work the soil," Walsh suggests. Harvey and Scott also plant beets, carrots and corn by early May. Harvey says some vegetable seeds prefer colder soil to germinate.

The tender plants, which are more susceptible to cold and frost, should not be planted until later in May or preferably early June, the experts agree. These include cucumbers, beans, squash, pumpkins and peppers. The Walshes say plants that are especially sensitive to frost or require longer growing seasons, such as tomatoes, peppers and eggplant, should be started indoors six to eight weeks prior to transplanting. The key transplanting date for many gardeners is June 10. A full moon in early June often brings frost, according to both science and folklore. If the full moon occurs before the 10th, any sensitive vegetables transplanted after that date will likely be frost-free.

Harvey says there's no magic to knowing when to sow. But novice gardeners may do well to follow some advice from George Scott — when in doubt, consult experienced gardeners in your area. There's one thing they like to do almost as much as garden, and that's talk about it.

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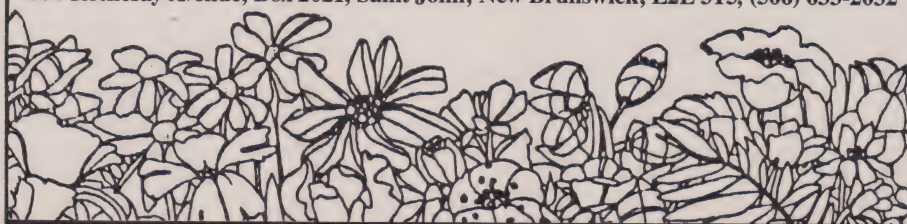
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SPECIAL REPORT

Canning still clouded by aftermath of chemical fire

The 1986 Canning chemical fire still haunts many of the villagers, who don't want a new warehouse on the same site

by Kathryn Morse

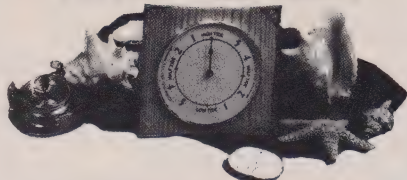
When the volunteer firefighters arrived at the Maple Leaf warehouse in Canning, N.S., they thought they had an ordinary fire on their hands. Four hours later the town's 750 residents had been evacuated in an emergency of national significance. The warehouse contained 4,000 kilograms of agricultural chemicals. It was May 31,

1986, Apple Blossom weekend, and the warehouse had been especially well stocked for the planting season. The 50 different kinds of concentrated pesticides and fertilizers combined and burned, spreading over the village and surrounding areas in a sickening plume of smoke.

It took six hours to get the chemical inferno under control. Twenty firefighters went to a local hospital complaining of

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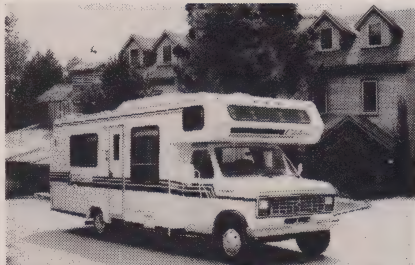
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SPECIAL REPORT



DNS PHOTOGRAPHY

Harnish's lawn turned black after run-off flowed into ditches in front of her house

throat irritation and stomach pain. None of the volunteer fire departments was equipped with special chemical firefighting equipment. Fifty to 75 residents also went to hospital, dizzy and nauseated. No one was admitted but the department of health conducted a series of blood and urine tests on 220 Canning residents and firefighters to identify possible liver and kidney damage.

Dr. John Prentice, who supervised the testing, says short-term exposure to the chemicals was the most serious problem. "Pesticides now are not biopersistent," he says. "They don't stick around very long but they are acutely toxic." After two weeks, no one appeared to have problems and no further testing was done.

The only immediate casualties in the fire were a few thousand sticklebacks, tiny, non-commercial fish, which were found belly-up in the Habitant River below the warehouse two days after the fire. Water used to fight the fire had flowed into drainage ditches and into the river.

The fire attracted national and local media attention which deepened a rift developing in the town between the residents who wanted to forget the whole incident and those who wanted to keep it alive out of concern about the broader implications of the fire. The latter group, a vocal minority, formed a committee called Concerned Citizens of Canning.

"The committee was formed as a support group for those immediately affected

by the fire," explains Ginny Point, one of the group's members and a founder of the Ecology Action Centre in Halifax. "Because there was the split in the town and there were people who really didn't want to make it an issue, the people who were concerned about the fire were almost ostracized."

Some residents simply didn't want anything bad to be associated with their town. Others were worried about the effect of negative publicity on their businesses — tourism is an important source of income in Canning. The town's quiet streets are lined with towering elms and elegant Victorian houses have been converted to inns. Canning is the last stop before Cape Blomidon, a spectacular cliff-side park overlooking the Bay of Fundy. No one wanted to see visitors scared away with talk of chemical contamination.

Many farmers wanted to keep the whole incident quiet because they were afraid all the attention focussed on Canning would result in limitations being placed on the use of pesticides. They knew about the risks involved in storing and using the chemicals but saw them as essential tools, part of making a living in a difficult business. If a similar chemical fire had taken place outside the heart of Nova Scotia's most productive agricultural area, there would likely have been more widespread uneasiness.

But the Concerned Citizens, most of whom live near the warehouse and



A rift developed in Canning between residents who wanted to forget the fire and those concerned about its implications

suffered the most due to their proximity to the fire, didn't want to let the issue die. They suffered direct financial costs, more so than other villagers, and they wanted compensation. They felt the authorities had a double standard regarding compensation for property damage in the fire. "People on pensions were told to go home and steam clean everything but they didn't get any assistance," says Robin Feldman. "Maple Leaf got the clean-up paid for by the government."

The Feldmans lost money on their home, which had been up for sale at the time of the fire. "It took two years to sell our house," says Robin Feldman, who now lives with her husband and two children in Ottawa. "We really suffered financially. We were offered a very low price because people had heard the property wasn't safe."

Their neighbour, Shirley Harnish, has a similar story. Her lawn turned black after run-off from the fire flowed into

ditches in front of her house. The department of the environment removed the top six inches of contaminated soil in her yard but she still wasn't able to get a clean bill of health from the department when she tried to sell her home a year later.

"I sold it with the stipulation that the chemicals were still there. We lost \$20,000 on our house," she says. Harnish also lost friends in the community as a result of her involvement with Concerned Citizens. "I thought my friends would



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SPECIAL REPORT

stand behind me but they didn't," she says with a trace of bitterness. Harnish moved to nearby Kentville on the advice of her doctor, who said living next door to Maple Leaf was a constant reminder of the fire and was aggravating her high blood pressure. Leaving Canning was very difficult, she says. "I lived there all my life; I was born there. It was a real hard decision to make."

Some members of Concerned Citizens sought legal advice regarding compensation for property damage, but ran into a brick wall. "We couldn't get a lawyer to represent us," says Feldman, who ran a

weaving business from her home and lost at least a month's work after the fire. "Any legal firm connected to the municipality, the chemical companies or Maple Leaf wouldn't touch it. A lawyer in Halifax was interested but later he backed out. He just wouldn't return our calls."

In addition to banding together in an attempt to get compensation, Concerned Citizens wanted to make sure those responsible for cleaning up the aftermath of the fire did it properly. Many in the group had become increasingly concerned about the provincial government's ability to conduct the clean-up because of

the way the evacuation had been handled.

"The department of the environment said 'we'll get the test results back on Friday and by then we'll tell you whether you can go back to your houses,'" recalls Point. "Friday came along and they hadn't got the test results back but they said, 'based on what we assume the test results are going to be, you can go back to your houses now.' There were numbers of occasions like that where people didn't have a lot of confidence in their decision-making capabilities."

Feldman echoes Point's feelings. "They told residents to return before the test results were in. When we went back, the site clean-up people were wearing suits and masks. We didn't want our kids there. We stayed in Wolfville for a month."

The group was initially involved in gathering information about the toxicity of various chemicals in the warehouse but found even the experts didn't know what ingredients were in Canning's "toxic cocktail." "We did try to find out what could have been created in the fire, what unknown and unstudied compounds there might have been," says Point, who now lives in Halifax. "Nobody would touch it. The biochemists and the epidemiologists that we talked to, nobody hazarded a guess. They were not being irresponsible, they just didn't know."

There is a great deal of scientific uncertainty regarding the toxicity of pesticides in general. Pesticide toxicity is usually measured through tests on laboratory animals and this data is open to interpretation. Some pesticides which are approved in Canada are banned in the U.S. and vice versa. In the late '70s it was discovered that more than 100 pesticides approved by the federal government for use in Canada had undergone invalid safety tests at the Industrial Bio-test Laboratories in the United States. Each year pesticides which have been in use for several years are restricted and new pesticides come on the market, creating confusion for government bureaucrats and farmers alike.

Temik was one of the pesticides which caused the most concern after the Canning fire. One hundred and eighty kilograms of the pesticide, used primarily in potato growing, were unaccounted for during the clean-up. Temik is a suspect carcinogen, which means it has been shown to cause cancer in some animals. In a study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta it was proved to cause potentially damaging changes to the immune systems of people who consume low levels through their drinking water. It has also been linked to birth defects in New Brunswick's potato-growing belt.

While Temik breaks down in a few weeks in surface water, it stays intact for years if it enters groundwater and wells.

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It is considered a health risk at one part per billion in drinking water. In retrospect, the firefighters learned it would have been better to let the warehouse burn, to get a complete combustion of the chemicals and to minimize the fallout in the area. By dousing it with an estimated one million gallons of water, the chemicals didn't burn cleanly, the run-off contaminated a nearby river and the resulting "soup" created a difficult and hazardous waste disposal problem.

"The clean-up took a long time," recalls Point, who still has a thick file of notes she kept on the aftermath of the fire. The delays were due to uncertainty about how the "soup" should be handled but, more critically, who should handle it. There were jurisdictional overlaps between the federal and provincial government and between various government departments. "They left the chemical soup there for five days before anybody did anything because they didn't know who was supposed to clean it up," she says. "It sat on a dirt floor in the warehouse and slowly seeped into the ground." A month after the fire, the toxic sludge was cleaned up and stored in 160 45-gallon drums. The drums sat on the warehouse site for several weeks, at first under guard, then abandoned.

The clean-up was fraught with problems from beginning to end. A private firm was in charge of the clean-up but the provincial department of the environment

Pesticides are still being stored in an old storage shed next to the site of the fire

was ultimately responsible for supervising the procedure.

"The removal of the waste was totally unsatisfactory," says Point. "It went past the New Brunswick border where the papers were apparently in order but then it was stopped in Quebec. Quebec said the papers weren't in order, which causes you to wonder about how consistent the standards are."

When the two 18-wheelers returned with the waste in July, they were shuttled from one place to another and parked

in a farmer's field in Hillaston, King's County, where they stayed for several months. Everyone breathed a sigh of relief when the waste was transported to Ontario for disposal in early 1987. The ordeal was finally over and life in Canning could get back to normal — or so they thought.

But the controversy rose again when, 18 months after the fire, the company started rebuilding the warehouse on the same site. Many of the residents felt the chemicals should have been located outside the village rather than on Main Street, the centre of a residential area.

Although there are provincial government safety standards for chemical storage areas, it's up to municipal councils to approve the location of such warehouses. Village commissioner Merritt Gibson says the municipality approved the application to rebuild a warehouse but the company has to apply for a permit to store pesticides in it. So far the permit hasn't been issued. Meanwhile, the pesticides are being stored in the old storage shed next door.

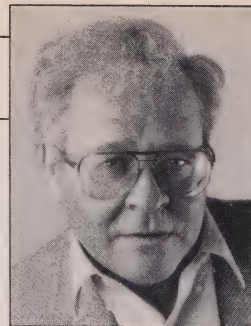
Gibson says after nearly three years the fire still haunts the village. He is concerned about all the other towns which have chemical storage areas on their main streets, but he is tired of Canning being the example. "Let the whole thing die," he says. "We've had a lot of bad publicity. Why should Canning pay the price?"

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Storm stayed and reminiscing

We ducked out of a howling blizzard and into a \$40-room at Ste.-Anne-de-Madawaska, N.B. The woman who ran the motel had white hair, glasses, pale skin, pink cheeks and a face shaped like an apple doll's. She was Acadian but her English was flawless. We were her only customers that night and she gave us the one room she had that boasted a bathtub. The room was toasty. The snow we tracked across the carpet melted in seconds. We had two double beds, extra blankets, a television set that worked fine and our own bottle of Bacardi. We were unusually aware of how lucky we were to be alive.

Since morning we had driven 500 miles from Ontario. In a parade like a motorized version of Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, we had inched through Quebec among tens of thousands of storm-lashed vehicles. We had slithered past the blinking lights of tow trucks, police cars and ambulances and past dozens of cars that had skidded into ditches and median strips. Darkness had fallen at five and, for the past two hours, oncoming trucks had been blinding us with their headlights and the blankets of slush they hurled over us. It was now only 7 p.m. but it felt like midnight.

The New Moon Motel stood a football field's length from a nest of commerce on the Trans-Canada Highway and as soon as the colour returned to my knuckles, I walked down there, through the feathery, foot-deep snow, to see what was going on. I found a gas station, restaurant and general store. The joint was open 24 hours a day and sold just about anything you could want. I wanted peanuts, potato chips, Coke and ice cubes to accompany our rum. But I might have bought a pipe, a watch, a crucifix, a set of kitchen knives, a peaked cap, a week's groceries, dinner with wine and a liqueur, a pin-up of a spectacular blonde in a yellow bikini or a slew of souvenirs from "La Republique de Madawaska."

I was 365 miles from Montreal, 315 miles from the Nova Scotia border and happy to linger in this bright, busy, chummy and faintly foreign haven. I gathered it was a family-run business, a home-away-from-home for truckers. Staff in both the restaurant and store were bilingual and, without being oily, supremely obliging. This was a terrific place in which to stand around on a murderous winter night — and feel good about being Canadian.

Munching nuts and sipping rum and

Coke in the motel room, my wife and I remembered another truckers' stop. One fine summer morn, we had reported for breakfast to the 24-hour eatery at the Fundy Line Motel in Newcastle, N.B. A gabby couple in their mid-60s joined us. The man was from near Montreal and that's where they now lived, but she was from right here in Newcastle. They'd visited Florida, the Rockies and Victoria, B.C. but, to her, the Miramichi River would always be "the spot on earth." Why, it had been so clean in her girlhood that she'd swum in it, summer after summer after magical summer.

But she wanted to talk about bears. Some people just love to talk about bears. The man said a wild bear recently got so accustomed to people that he regularly lay down on a highway to playfully block Newcastle-Chatham traffic, but that was

*It was a terrific
hangout for a
murderous
Canadian winter
night*

nothing compared to the bear the woman had heard about in the old days. When the timber workers returned to the forest, she said, the familiar sound of power generators lured this bear back into their fold. Pretty soon, he'd wander into the mess hall to beg scraps of food.

"He'd sit right up at the counter with the men while he was eating," she insisted. "He got so tame they gave him a job. He helped them move the logs, you know? He had another job, too. He used to lift the generators onto the trucks for them." We must have looked skeptical. "God's truth," she said.

Later that summer, we found carvings of bears and lumberjacks enjoying life together in tiny camps, under glass. These marvelous models were at the

Madawaska Museum, Edmundston, just up the Saint John River from St.-Anne-de-Madawaska. They included horses pulling wagons and sleighs, a bear with a chunk of wood in his mouth, another one with a small log in his claws and a man greeting a third bear with open arms at the door of a bunkhouse.

The bear-story lady, the museum and our time at the New Moon remind me that it's hard to wander around the Maritimes — or find yourself storm-stayed in a Maritime village — without running into people, places, stories and small adventures that are worth talking about. What fun Leonard Ellen of Montreal must have had down here!

He's a lean, soft-spoken gent with a solicitous air, but his courteous style disguises the smarts and toughness that helped make him exceedingly rich. Along with Reuben Cohen of Moncton, Ellen came to control the multibillion-dollar Central Capital empire of financial-services companies. But 40 odd years ago, he was just a hustling teenaged hawker, peddling lines of sundries to drugstores all over the Maritimes. Later, he went into the lumber business, purchasing wood from "literally hundreds" of small Maritime mills (no doubt run by bears).

Ellen has been so bold as to suggest — in the Halifax Club yet — that he knows Nova Scotia better than 99 per cent of Nova Scotians. Moreover, his status as a Maritimer was once so unusual that Hugh John Flemming, premier of New Brunswick in the '50s, named him an "honorary citizen" of the province. That's a distinction that no other Montreal-born son of a Jewish immigrant from Russia has ever enjoyed. "But by the time I was 20," Ellen recalls, "I knew every nook and cranny in the Maritimes."

I'm 54, and I still can't make that boast. Nooks and crannies I have never seen include Riley Brook, Plaster Rock and Grand Manan Island in New Brunswick; Digby Neck, Tancook Island and the 1,000-foot-deep valley of the Cheticamp River in Nova Scotia; and in P.E.I., Souris, Panmure Island, Victoria Harbour and heaven knows how many hundred sumptuous beaches. With the blizzard still swirling around us at the New Moon Motel on the second night of the year of our Lord 1989, we plotted visits to all these places in the coming summer. Surely it would be as long and hot as a 12-inch chili-dog, with extra sauce. ☒



RAY FENNELLY

Christina Parker of Contemporary Graphics in St. John's says Newfoundland's overpowering environment has an effect on its artists

Like it before you buy it

Newfoundland's gallery owners and collectors agree that, even when buying art as an investment, it must give pleasure

by J.M. Sullivan

When asked why people should invest in Newfoundland art, Christina Parker's immediate response is, "well, why shouldn't they?" Some of the country's most talented artists live in Newfoundland, she says. "When I travel outside the province to see corporate consultants, they're astonished at the range and quality of the work being done here. They ask, 'how come we don't know about this?'"

Parker owns and runs Contemporary Graphics, a small commercial gallery in downtown St. John's. She doesn't limit herself to representing Newfoundland artists but, when it comes to Newfoundland art, she knows what she's talking about. "The art made here looks different. We have an overpowering environment, and when you're exposed to the elements as much as we are, it can't not affect what you do. Nobody makes light, pretty, California paintings here, living on this ocean."

When it comes to buying art, Parker feels that people should not invest in a painting unless they love it. Even when buying art solely as investment, she says

it should be done with the heart as well as the head. Parker's not the only one in Newfoundland who feels that way.

"People buy art because it brings them pleasure, they need it in their environment and they appreciate it," says Emma Butler of Emma Butler Gallery in St. John's. "The art market is like any other market. It can bottom out. If you buy something you like which you think will increase in price and then it doesn't, you're still left with something you like."

For those who would like to invest in one or more pieces of art, it's best to start by visiting galleries and exhibitions to get a feel for the artists in the region as well as price ranges. Parker says there is no better way to learn about a piece of art than to go to an exhibition opening and talk to the artist.

Don't be in a rush to buy, says Butler, whose "regular customers come in and take a waltz through, waiting for that special something." One of her customers is Ian Bruneau, who buys four or five pieces a year.

"I buy what I like, that's what I've always felt," Bruneau says. "If it catches you, eats away at you and it's financially

possible to buy it, that's the way I approach it. It's easier if it's less expensive."

The decision to buy should come from a person's response to the work, says Parker. It can be love at first sight or the attraction can come from some casual contacts. Although it makes sense to buy the best quality that you can afford, an inexpensive painting that catches your eye could also turn out to be a good investment. "If it's \$100 and you're drawn to it, that's not a big commitment," says Bruneau. "But if it's a couple of thousand dollars, you usually have to go away, think about it. If, visually, you're sort of haunted by a piece, then you have to have it."

Parker advises customers to look for what is optically pleasing. "We're looking at it with our eyes, and we like to see colours that are beautiful, a mood that is wonderful. Most often it's the subtle and simple things that will do this. It's the idea of less is more. And still some paintings that are vigorous and energetic with tons of paint on them will give a similar experience."

Most people have an instinctive reaction to a work's integrity. While they can trust their own instincts, they can also work to develop their own tastes. "Look around at different styles of art," advises Bruneau, "because we tend to settle in areas we're comfortable with. Dropping into galleries is always free, and you get a chance to meet artists and see their different styles. Don't let others tell you what

to buy, you have to like it yourself."

Butler says she's had customers tell her that after a few visits to her gallery, they were drawn back to a painting they did not like originally. "I've watched people's tastes change. Many people start with a perception that art is something with four corners and a frame around it and they weren't comfortable with anything that didn't fit this definition. You have to stretch yourself."

At the same time as developing a taste and an appetite for art, it's also possible to build a collection. "A private individual could make a good investment with \$5,000," Parker says.


One way to develop a valuable collec-

tion is to watch for talented, young artists who are just beginning to establish a reputation. Chances are, their paintings are still affordable. The Pratts and Gerald Squires and David Blackwood, for example, were not always household names across the country.

Among the Newfoundland artists whose work is carried in Parker's gallery are Jake Kennedy, Sid Butt, Diana Dabinett, Scott Goudie and Gerald Squires. Butler's gallery includes works by Christopher and Mary Pratt, David Blackwood, Reg and Helen Shepherd and Julia Pickard.

Although purchasing art as an investment is common, cashing in on a collection is not, at least in Newfoundland.

That's partially because it's difficult to establish a valuable collection without becoming attached to it. "If you've bought the work for the right reasons, it's almost impossible to sell anything," Bruneau explains.

Newfoundland galleries are generally reluctant to resell paintings, says Parker. Artists usually don't get money if their work is resold and a gallery doesn't like to take in work by an artist it's representing. "Most people don't go to commercial galleries for resale, although there may be specific works a gallery would love to get their hands on. Most people and most companies would have an auction or advertise in the newspapers if they had a major collection for sale." 

From \$500 to \$15,000

Newfoundland artist Gerry Squires can remember a time when "I couldn't give my work away." As recently as 10 years ago, a painting that now sells for \$6,000 would have gone for \$400, he says. Czechoslovakian-born Dusan Kadlec says that when he came to Halifax, he considered himself lucky if he sold a painting for \$90.

Atlantic Canadians who recognized the talents of these two artists and purchased one of their early works invested wisely even when the increased cost of living is taken into account. The same holds true for other celebrated artists of the region.

Joseph Purcell, now living in Lunenburg, N.S., says he recently cleaned and reframed one of his paintings for a client.

Purchased in 1965 for \$200, the painting is valued at \$6,000 today. The work of Antigonish's Vicky Golling MacLean has climbed in price from \$50 in the late '60s to as high as \$8,300.

According to Christopher and Mary Pratt of St. John's, it's difficult to compare their early paintings with work they are doing today. However, Christopher says his recent silk screen prints, which sell for approximately \$1,800, are similar in every way to his early prints except in price — they once sold for as little as \$50. Mary remembers selling oil paintings at a show in New Brunswick in the early '70s for \$350 to \$500. Similar work now fetches \$12,000 to \$15,000, she says.

For both Bruno and Molly Bobak of Fredericton, N.B., work that sold for \$800 in 1960 now sells for \$8,000. The work has appreciated by 10 per cent a year, says Bruno. He says that art should be bought for the joy of it, but for the inexperienced art buyer, a consultation with an art expert — a museum curator, for example — is advisable.

— S.J.W.



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A versatile vegetable

Prince Edward Island potatoes have a reputation in the kitchens of Atlantic Canada and around the world

by Janet Reeves

With some of the world's finest seed and table potatoes grown on Prince Edward Island, it's no wonder that this versatile vegetable finds a place on dinner tables around the region night after night. Today's cooks are not only serving up potatoes, baked, scalloped and stuffed in various ways, they're also incorporating them into less traditional recipes for breads, pastas and desserts.

Roland MacDonald of the P.E.I. Potato Marketing Commission says there are a number of reasons for the high quality of potatoes on Prince Edward Island. He attributes a large part of the potato's success to the rich red soil and excellent climate. "Potatoes like cool growing conditions and, although we may have warm days, we rarely experience extreme heat and the evenings are always cool."

Earl Banks of Miscouche is one of the Island's top potato growers and the winner of the local Chamber of Commerce "Exporter of the Year" award. Banks' potatoes have been exported to countries around the world, including Venezuela, Portugal, Greece, Uruguay, Italy and Japan. "Over and above the nutrients, P.E.I. soil is relatively free from rocks and stones that are found in most other regions," he says. "As a result, we have much less bruising and damage to tubers during harvest."

Potatoes have had many uses over the years. Early Europeans carried them in their pockets to ward off rheumatism. Baked potatoes have often been used to warm skates, boots and pockets. Our ancestors tossed raw peelings into the fire to remove soot and creosote build-up.

But it is as a nutritious and versatile vegetable that potatoes are best known. They contain vitamin C, potassium, iron, thiamin, niacin, calcium, protein, complex carbohydrates and, if eaten with the peeling, are a good source of dietary fibre. A medium potato contains only 90 to 100 calories.

As about one-third of potatoes' nutrients are close to the peel, it's important to peel them as thinly as possible. Boil potatoes in the least amount of water and cook only until tender.

Of the 170 varieties in North America, five make up 80 per cent of the potatoes on the market. Russet Burbank, a potato developed in 1890, is the undisputed leader. Formerly called Netted Gem, it is an oblong, buff-skinned potato with white flesh, shallow eyes and a fluffy light texture. Russets are an excellent baking potato and are also good mashed, fried or in baked goods.

Kennebec, Sebago and Superior are three popular varieties of potatoes known as round whites. These potatoes are smooth-skinned, white-fleshed and rounded in shape. They are best when boiled. In recent years, many people have been turning to yellow-fleshed potatoes like Yukon Gold and Bintje, which are good for baking, boiling and frying.

When buying potatoes, whatever variety, look for firm tubers, free from wrinkles, cuts, decay or greening. Store potatoes in a cool, dry, well-ventilated place away from light but not in the refrigerator. Potatoes stored at too cool temperatures will turn dark and sometimes have an undesirable sweet taste. When exposed to either sunlight or artificial light, they turn green. This green portion has a bitter taste and should be cut off the potato before cooking.

Unlike other vegetables, the potato does not deteriorate quickly. If stored properly, it will keep for several months. The potatoes that you buy at this time of year are as high in nutrition as when freshly harvested in September.

Bagels

1 medium potato
1 tbsp. dry yeast
1½ tsp. honey
1 tbsp. vegetable oil
1 tbsp. honey

1 whole egg
1 egg white (reserve yolk for glaze)
5 cups flour app.

Glaze

1 egg yolk
1 tsp. cold water
poppy or sesame seeds

Boil sliced potato in 2½ cups water until soft. Drain, reserving water, and mash. Cool water to lukewarm.

Start yeast in ½ cup potato water and 1½ tsp. honey. To remaining potato water add oil, 1 tbsp. honey, yeast mixture, mashed potato, egg, egg white and flour. When dough is stiff, knead for 8-10 minutes, adding extra flour if necessary. Place dough in a greased pan. Cover and let rise until almost double in bulk, about 45 minutes. Punch down and let rise again for 45 minutes.

Shape dough into three 12-inch rolls. Cut each into 8 equal pieces. Form each piece into a small roll. Moisten ends and form bagels. Let rise about 15 minutes. Meanwhile, heat 3 quarts of water to boiling. Reduce heat and simmer the bagels (a few at a time) for 5 minutes, turning once. Drain and place on lightly oiled cookie sheets. Preheat oven to 425°F. Brush bagels with the glaze mixture and sprinkle with poppy or sesame seeds. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes. Cool on a wire rack. Makes 24 bagels.

Lemon-custard potato pie

pastry for single-crust, 9-inch pie, cooked for 6-8 minutes

½ cup warm mashed potato
2 tbsp. butter
2 egg whites
¾ cup sugar
2 egg yolks
juice of ½ lemon
1 tbsp. finely grated lemon rind
½ cup milk

Preheat oven to 400°F. Whip potato and butter with electric mixer until smooth. Cool. Beat egg whites until stiff peaks form. To potato/butter mixture, add sugar, egg yolks, lemon juice, rind and milk. Blend thoroughly. Fold in egg whites. Pour into partially cooked pastry shell. Bake 25 to 30 minutes.

Lobster stuffed baked potatoes

6 baked potatoes
1 tbsp. butter
½ cup sour cream
¼ cup grated onion
¼ tsp. pepper
½ cup diced cooked lobster meat
¼ cup diced mushrooms
½ cup grated cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 375°F. Cut baked potatoes in half lengthwise and carefully scoop out insides, reserving the skins. In a bowl, mash the potato, then add butter, sour cream, onion and pepper. Beat until smooth. Fold in lobster meat and mushrooms and place mixture back in the potato skin halves. Sprinkle with grated cheese and place on a baking sheet. Bake 15 to 20 minutes.





When **Gene Ward** goes out on weekends, he tucks an ordinary pair of stainless steel soup spoons into the pocket of his jacket. It's not eating he's concerned about — Gene makes music with these kitchen utensils. In fact he's practically a high profile entertainer at the Olde Dublin Pub in Charlottetown, P.E.I. where he likes to hang out.

He's partial to Irish tunes, a regular fare served up at the Dublin. When the band starts to play, Gene wraps his fingers around the spoons, he holds them nimbly and taps them on his thigh to the beat of the music.

Stepping into the limelight is a change for Gene, who's spent 42 of his working years in the composing room at the Guardian-Patriot newspaper.

Although now close to 60, Gene learned to play the spoons as a boy. He says, however, that he used them strictly for eating purposes until about 12 years ago. Inspired by the music playing one night at a local pub, he borrowed a pair of spoons and gave his old hobby a try. It took a bit of practice but the crowd didn't seem to mind. "Once you learn to hold them it doesn't take long to catch on," he assures. "At one time I didn't think I had rhythm but now everyone tells me I do."



GORD JOHNSTON

Gene Ward: a pair of stainless steel spoons, some rhythm and a love of Irish music

Of course Gene's had to pay a price to become the city's best and most well-known spoon player. He points to the callouses on his hands. "They don't get sore anymore," he says. "Away back when I started I got blisters every night."

Gene says many people are amazed that simple kitchen utensils can actually make music. He remembers one man dropping by his table with a special

request. " 'You've got to come to our table and show my wife how to do that,' the man pleaded."

As long as he can hold cutlery in hand, Gene will probably keep playing the spoons. "Sometimes I say to myself, 'what are you doing this for. You're too old to act this way.' But when someone plays Irish music, my fingers start moving."

— Marcia Porter



SANDY MORGAN

Mac Armstrong has worked at the water-powered family sawmill for more than 50 years

Mac's Mill has been in the family for three generations. At 64, its present operator draws his energy and youthfulness from the mill's weathered old boards. **MacKay "Mac" Armstrong** has been working in and around the mill "since I was high enough to be of any use to my dad." He loves his work and the old mill tucked away at the end of a long tree-lined lane in Upper Waweig, Charlotte County, N.B.

But Mac is quick to point out that, despite its remote location, the sawmill has a host of yearly visitors from across Canada, the United States and even Europe. The mill is one of the oldest in the province and the only one, besides the one at Kings Landing outside Fredericton, that has no electricity. It is run totally by water.

"You know, there hasn't been a gallon of fuel burned here since it was built by my grandfather," says Mac. The Gold-



ALBERT LEE

Lucy Smith is the top female cross-country runner in the CIAU

smith Stream runs under its beamed floor and through the sluice-way, pushing the doors of the turbine, moving the heavy metal cogs and after a gentle push from Mac's hand, the blade winds up to full speed, ready for a day's work. And after a lifetime of working at this still commercially vital mill, Mac has all 10 fingers.

"I don't know what I'd do if I got hurt and wasn't able to work," muses the small, vibrant man in an unusual, pensive moment. He says he can't imagine ever having to retire. All winter he cuts trees on his 2,000-acre woodlot which he stores, come spring and summer, in a small headpond just above the mill. Most days he heads off to the woods or mill, depending on the season, right after breakfast and doesn't return home until after dark.

In some ways, Mac seems a throw-back to another generation. He is content to cut and mill his logs. "You might think

it would become monotonous, but it never does. Every stick is different and I do something different with every one of them."

— Sandy Morgan

When 10-year-old **Lucy Smith** used to run along Shore Drive in Bedford, N.S. with her mother, she may not have realized that someday she would be a great runner. But that's exactly what happened and more quickly than she expected. Eleven years later the Dalhousie English student has become Canada's top female university cross-country runner.

Smith gained the title when she won the Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Union (CIAU) cross-country championship race that was held in Quebec City in late November. Three weeks later, Smith ran in the Canadian Seniors' national cross-country race and came first again. That finish qualified Smith to run this month in Norway in her first World Cross-Country Championship. "It's fan-

tastic to be running internationally, it's a real challenge," Smith says of her international experiences.

Just before Christmas, Smith and her teammates ran against 13 other countries in Chiba, Japan in a marathon relay race. Canada placed sixth, allowing the team to compete again next year. "That trip was really the icing on the cake because we didn't expect it," Smith says.

Smith started running seriously in junior high school. From there, she naturally progressed through high school athletics to where she is today. Although her rigorous training schedule takes up a lot of her time and is a "big, big commitment," Smith says her professors have been very understanding.

Smith looks forward to someday running for Canada at the Commonwealth Games or the Olympics. "Inside, I feel as if I can go quite a long way," she says.

— Maggie Brown



GARY PATTERSON

Max Taylor: more than 1,000 "John Henrys"

Collecting autographs is nothing new but a collection as large and impressive as that assembled by 72-year-old **Maxwell Taylor** of Grand Falls, Nfld. is hardly commonplace.

For more than 30 years Max has collected autographs — about 1,000 in all. His collection is remarkable: artist Marc Chagall, astronaut Neil Armstrong, playwright and actor Noel Coward, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, President Ronald Reagan, opera singer Marion Anderson, Viscount Montgomery, the first Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion. The list goes on.

While Max doesn't prize one autograph over another, one signature stands out — that of Soviet leader Alexei Kosygin. His is the only signature Max collected personally. In 1967, Kosygin visited the paper mill where Taylor worked. "I didn't have any paper with me," recalls Max, "so I ran over to his car and asked him to sign my cigarette package."

Max didn't confine himself to collecting autographs of the famous. He also collected signatures of ordinary people who do interesting things for a living or were the first to perform or invent or do something special. He obtained autographs simply by writing and asking for them. "I would read about people in magazines or newspapers and then I would write to them and ask them to autograph the article."

Each autograph was carefully catalogued and covered in plastic. Magazine articles, newspaper clippings and photographs accompanied each signature in a separate file folder. The folders were stored in bundles, alphabetically, on shelves in a bedroom closet.

Time passed, the collection grew and Max and his wife Marguerite moved from a house to an apartment. Less space coupled with a growing concern over the future preservation of his collection prompted Max to donate it to Memorial University last spring. "While I enjoyed putting the collection together, I also got pleasure in giving it away," says Max.

— Alice LeDuc

The Great Atlantic Canadian Limerick Contest

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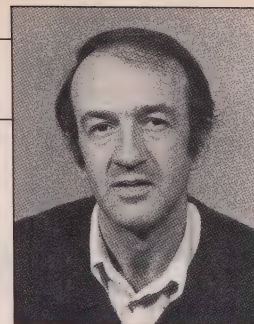
Contest deadline is April Fool's Day, 1989.

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Saving children for our future

Like thousands of other people I do my bit, meagre though it may be, to help out in the Third World. Over the past few years the appeals from the various aid agencies have become more insistent and more frequent. For a moment I wondered whether there was really a new urgency afoot or whether the agencies had simply adopted the high-pressure techniques of the advertising industry.

The matter was clarified in part by a wrenching bad news/good news document called "The State of the World's Children 1988" put out by UNICEF, the United Nations children's aid agency, a summary of which was mailed out to donors. As it makes clear, there is indeed urgency, although there's progress too, at least on this one front of child mortality rate.

The report, an eye-opener, sets up the wider context: whereas we fret about a possible recession in the industrial world, the Third World has been in recession for most of the '80s as prices for primary products have been at their lowest for 30 years, as interest rises on staggering debts, as wars and famines take their toll.

In one telling statistic, UNICEF states that in 1980 there was a net transfer of more than \$40 billion from the rich nations to the poor ones. By 1985 that had reversed. When foreign aid and loans to the poor nations were balanced off against interest payments and profits taken out, the transfer was \$30 billion from the poor to the rich.

As the noose tightens, the burden often falls on the poorest strata of society, and in particular on their children. A quarter of a million children under five died every week during 1988 in Asia, Africa and Latin America combined — 123 million for the year. Countless millions more have been left stunted, blinded and brain-damaged by various diseases and complications of malnutrition and unsanitary conditions.

The good news is relative, but about two million children are being saved a year because of advances in basic health services. Immunization coverage has extended to about 50 per cent of the developing world's children from about 10 per cent since 1980. And oral rehydration (ORT) during bouts of diarrhea — the leading killer of Third World children — is now known and used by about 20 per cent of families, although it was hardly known outside scientific circles a decade ago. Insistence on breast feeding, spacing of children at least two years

apart and other basic health measures have also helped.

But there's something more important still in the wind. UNICEF says that if the challenge of preventing needless child deaths is to be met it will be met by a social movement rather than a purely medical one. To a large degree it's happening. U.N. Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar has said that a "child survival revolution has begun to spread across the world."

It begins with the encouraging fact that preventing child deaths requires no fancy technologies but rather the spread of knowledge. Immunization is cheap and increasingly available, requiring mostly motivation on the part of parents. (The UN has set a goal of immunizing the great majority of Third World children against

caused rather than prevented disease. Last fall the group that engineered the boycott, the Action for Corporate Accountability in the U.S., called for its renewal, saying Nestlé and another company, American Home Products (makers of Anacin) had broken the agreement and were pushing milk substitutes again. They asked consumers to not buy Nestlé's Tasters Choice Instant Coffee and Carnation Coffee-Mate.

Another notorious problem is the status of women. The health of children is not isolated from larger problems and the health and well-being of mothers is obviously one of them. A major part of the challenge of increasing the well-being of the Third World, UNICEF points out, is improving the condition of women against ingrained hardship and discrimination.

And there are ruling elites, often abetted by western governments, who would rather buy guns than support health programs, subsidize a national airline rather than buy food. These problems have become more severe in the last decade in some countries, although others have admirably refused to sacrifice health and food. In fact community health has continued expanding in most, some of which — Algeria is prominently mentioned — have even cut back on hospital spending rather than sacrifice community health. In their day-to-day work aid agencies, says UNICEF, see "how short a step it can be from a balance-of-payments crisis to a shortage of essential drugs, from a rise in oil prices to a mobile vaccination unit without fuel, from a debt falling due to a clinic being closed, from the withdrawal of a food subsidy to the stunting of a child."

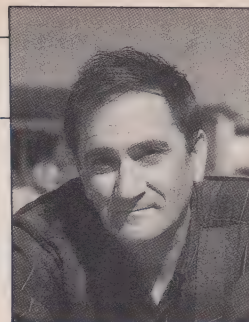
To close on the positive note, UNICEF sees the social mobilization for child health that is going on despite increasing difficulties as the first step towards greater possibilities: once people have been mobilized for one thing and have seen how knowledge can improve their lot, they will more easily move towards other forms of self-improvement, including changing the systems of ignorance and class privilege that often keeps them down. One can only hope so. Meanwhile, as the industrial world goes into its expected slowdown, the pressure will be on to cut foreign aid — both on governments and individual donors, who will have less money. It will then be up to us to do our part, as individuals and as nations, to resist this pressure. ☒

Burden of Third World debt falling on poorest strata

six main diseases by next year for a saving of three million lives a year at "less than the price of ten advanced fighter planes.") ORT is cheaper still — the main substances are sugar and water.

And information is getting easier to spread. Most families in the world now have radios, most villages have television. Also — and this surprised me — 60 per cent of the Third World's adults can now read and write and 80 per cent of its children now enrol in school.

Progress in the Third World, however, moves against enormous odds. The obstacles include such despicable problems as the counter-propaganda of commercial vested interests. Although UNICEF doesn't mention it, the most famous case was the seven-year worldwide boycott against the Nestlé corporation that ended in 1984. Nestlé signed a protocol with the UN promising to stop advertising infant formulas which, when mixed with the usually contaminated water available to Third World mothers,



Secure as a snowplow driver

If the publisher is in giddy raptures and the editor is in transports of joy, you can only imagine the unspeakable ecstasy of a backpage freelancer at the 10th anniversary of *Atlantic Insight*.

Job insecurity is a way of life with freelancers. New magazines, newspapers, TV and radio programs rise and, at the darndest times, fall. Even Tom Mix never had so many horses shot out from under him.

Few know what insecurity of that magnitude means...except, maybe, a Prince Edward Island snowplow driver on the eve of a crucial election. Napoleon Bonaparte's mother, officially known as Madame Mère, should be the patroness of freelance writers everywhere. Even when little Nappy was the biggest gorgonzola since Caesar and the rest of her brood were installed as kings and queens throughout Europe, Madame Mère still shuffled through the gilded halls of Versailles in her homespun Corsican shawl muttering, "Yes, but can it last?"

So, from this particular spot of thin ice, the accomplishment of *Atlantic Insight* in surviving — and more — for 10 years is most wondrous and rare. I raise a cheer for the Barrington Street miracle and resolve, in my own small corner, to stick a sock in Madame Mère and move onward and upward.

It was 10 years and roughly 144,000 words ago that I first popped up on this page or that this page was here to pop up on. I still play it by ear. No one has ever told me exactly, or even approximately, what the dickens it is I'm supposed to be doing here.

Strangers to charity, civility and niceness will say it often shows. Yet the guidelines for any scrivener in any case are few. All we're ever told is that the twin enemies are ignorance and boredom. Information and entertainment are, therefore, the goods we must purvey. Which one of those two tacks the backpager takes depends on the content of the rest of the magazine. In a straight news magazine there's no question.

The back page is there to counteract the gruesome information which has come before. The backpager, in cap, bells and rattle, is a small antidote to the depressing news. He's there to keep some of the readership from getting into hot baths with sharp instruments.

In another type of magazine it's the reverse. Readers who've frittered their time on Joan Collins, heritage quilt patterns and pumpkin muffins need

sobering at the end. Some "life is real, life is earnest" joker tries to even the balance with a dollop of pop philosophy.

Sometimes, in the midst of monthly bewilderment, I make a grab for the word "insight" in this magazine's title. There's the ticket, I say. Insight is what they want, insight into the inscrutable province is probably going this week for \$1.29 a pound, gutted, head on, at dockside in Halifax. So I ship off a consignment of insight to Insight. It seems like a pretty straightforward piece of inter-provincial trade. Yet the Cabot Strait often proves a tricky barrier to commodities like insight, hydro and hothouse cucumbers.

Giant squid, for example. It is fact, it is true, it is gospel — here in the slap-happy province we have squid with 30-foot tentacles and eyes the size of luncheon plates.

With livestock of this calibre on our doorstep is it any wonder (here comes the insight) that Newfoundlanders are more willing than some to believe in

from the girders of his own construction.

Why this should be is not clear. The Maritimes and Newfoundland are not complete hearts of darkness to each other. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick lie athwart the old traditional Newfie migration route and, down through the ages, there must have been at least some fraternization around the gas pumps.

Perhaps we've been looking at each other through the wrong end of the telescope. Newfoundlanders are a bit more than Screech-sodden cartoons who work like dogs to avoid work and who go berserk just for the hell of it. So is the shorthand image of the Maritimes from here scandalously skewed.

We get hung up on a John Mortimer McMaritimer Esq. who never was. He stuffs a fine shirt and his Missus in pleats, pearls and cashmere is a tasteful heritage restorer. They are smug about the present, indifferent about the future and positively idolatrous about some rosyfied past.

Electrification, rate of, may be a key. Somewhere among the 144,000 backpage words there was an item which drew an indignant yelp on the editorial page of *Harrowsmith*, another magazine.

Like many Newfoundlanders still to reach 50 — said I — I did my homework by kerosene lamp and other business in an outhouse out back and that I had no burning ambition to live the next part of my life in a tarted-up version of the same house with begonias in the thundermug and copies of *Harrowsmith* strewn among the polyurethaned relics of a previous (and genuine) rusticity.

Electricity came late to Newfoundland and it came with a bang and maybe we're still coasting on the excitement, promise and momentum. Some overseas folk to the west may not have smelled kerosene or baking bread for so long that it's a novelty again. Here, we've still got blisters from cutting firewood the first time around.

Ah, but it'll take many more than ten years of insightful Insight...though ten years can be several lifetimes for new magazines and, as always, for freelance journalists.

Longevity is relative, though. Madame Mère was right, in the end, about Napoleon and *Atlantic Insight* which began life with the departure of one Newfoundland premier and celebrates its tenth with the resignation of another.

That puts us all still one ahead of Premiers and snowplow drivers. ☒

The Cabot Strait is a tricky barrier for insight, hydro and hothouse cucumbers

"mythical" creatures like the Loch Ness Monster and the elusive New Brunswick Tory?

That seems straightforward enough but reaction from both sides of the Strait is often mercurial. Here on home turf the insular, chauvinistic parochial cry goes up: "Making us look like no-neck idiots again! What must they think in Dartmouth to learn that not only do we believe in giant squids, we actually have them!" The reaction from Dartmouth is equally dismal: "How do they get something that size back into a Screech bottle?"

On a large-scale map the Cabot Strait doesn't look like much — a mere 90 miles of ocean with a few monstrosities in the middle of it like giant squid and CN ferry breakfasts. But it will take many more decades of insight and Insight to bridge it. Indeed, there are many on both shores who would hang the bridgebuilder

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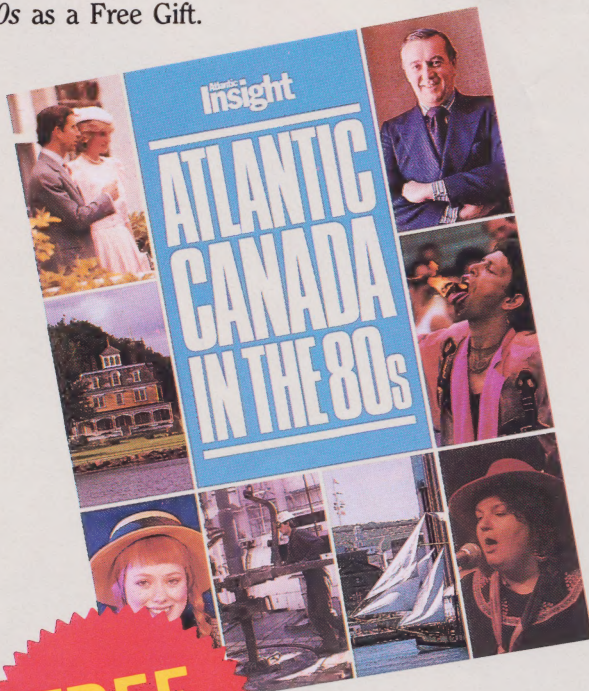
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